FRONTISPIECE VOLIII



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ADVENTURES

OF

GIL BLAS

OF

SANTILLANE.

A NEW TRANSLATION,

BY THE AUTHOR OF RODERICK RANDOM.

ADORNED WITH CUTS, NEATLY ENGRAVED.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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THE

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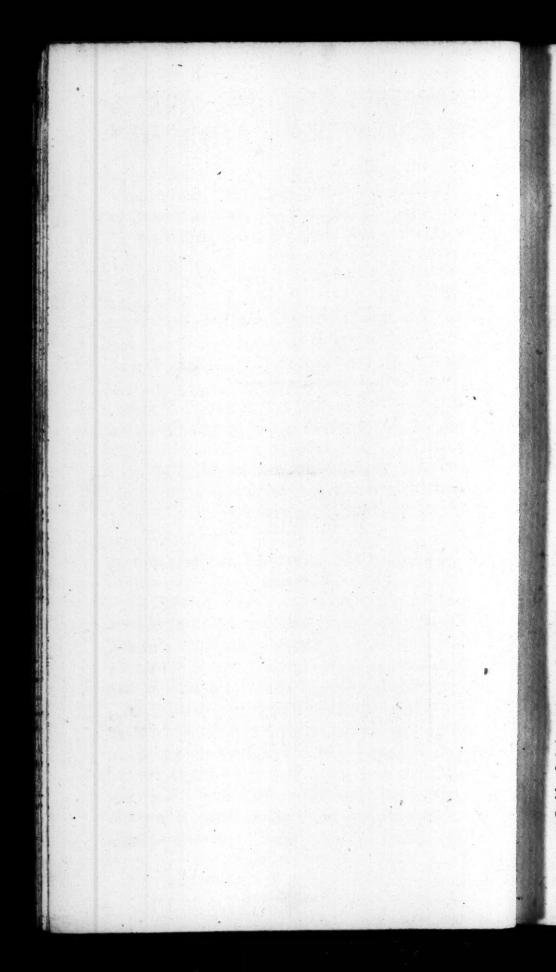
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THE

ADVENTURES

OF

GIL BLAS OF SANTILLANE.

BOOK VII.

CHAP. I.

The amours of Gil Blas and Dame Lorenza Sephora.

I Went accordingly to Xelva, to make reflitution of the three thousand ducats, which we had stole from Samuel Simon; and will freely own, I was tempted on the road to convert the money to my own use, in order to begin my stewardship under happy auspices. This I might have done with impunity; for, had I travelled sive or six days, and then returned, as if I had acquitted myself of my commission, Don AlVol. III. B phonso

phonso and his father would never have fuspected my fidelity. I did not yield, however, to the temptation, which I furmounted like a lad of honour; a victory not a little commendable in a young fellow, who had affociated with great cheats. There are a great many, who, though acquainted with honest people only, are not so scrupulous; those, especially, who are entrusted with fums which they may keep, without inte-

resting their reputation.

Having made restitution to the merchant. who expected nothing less, I returned to the castle of Levva, which the Count de Polan having left, had fet out again for Toledo, with Julia and Don Fernand. I found my new master more captivated than ever with Seraphina, his Seraphina enchanted by him, and Don Cæfar charmed with the possession of them both. I endeavoured to gain the friendship of that tender father, and succeeded. I became steward of the family, regulated every thing in it, received money from the farmers, difburfed for the expence of housekeeping, and had a despotic power over all the fervants. But, contrary to the usual practice of flewards, I did not abuse my power. I did not turn away those domestics who displeased me, nor expected that the rest should be entirely devoted to my will. If they adtheffed themselves directly to Don Cæsar or his fon, when they wanted any favour, far from thwarting their interest, I always spoke in their behalf: besides, the marks of affection

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tion which I every moment received from my masters, inspired me with zeal for their fervice; and I had nothing but their interest in view. There was no legerdemain in myadministration; and I was such a steward as is not every day to be met with. While I enjoyed the happiness of my condition, love, as if he had been jealous of what fortune had done for me, had a mind that I should owe fome favours to him also; and produced in the heart of Dame Lorenza Sephora, chief waiting woman to Seraphina, a violent inclination for master steward. My conquest (to relate things like a faithful historian) glanced upon her fiftieth year; but a lively look, an agreeable countenance, and two fine eyes, which the knew how to use to the best advantage, might be faid to make her still pass for the object of an intrigue. I could have wished only for a few roles in her complexion, for the was extremely pale; a circumstance which I did not fail to attribute to the austerity of celibacy.

The lady practifed upon me a long time by looks, in which her passion was painted: but, instead of answering her glances, I at first seemed not to perceive her design; by which behaviour, I appeared to her as a novice in gallantry; a discovery that she did not dislike. Imagining, therefore, that she ought no longer to confine herself to the language of the eyes, with a young man whom she believed less knowing than he was; during the very first conversation we had together, she declared her sentiments in form, that I might not

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be ignorant of them for the future. This fhe performed like one who had been at school. She feigned to be disconcerted while the fpoke to me, and after having freely expreffed all that she had to say, hid her face, to make me believe the was ashamed of letting me see her weakness. There was no refifting; and though I was determined more by vanity than inclination, I shewed myself very sensible of her affection. I even affected to be urgent, and acted the passionate lover so well, that I attracted her reproaches. Lorenza reproved me, but with fo much gentleness, that while she recommended moderation to me, she seemed not at all forry at my want of it. I should have pushed things still farther, if the beloved object had not been afraid of giving me a bad opinion of her virtue, by granting me a victory too cheap. We therefore parted till another occafion; Sephora, perfuaded that her false refistance made me look upon her as a vestal, and I, elevated with the sweet hope of bringing the adventure foon to a conclusion.

My affairs were in this fituation, when one of Don Cæsar's lacquies told me a piece of news which moderated my joy. This young fellow was one of those curious domestics, who make it their business to discover what passes in the family. As he was very assistance ous in paying his court to me, and regaled me every day with something new, he came, one morning, and told me, that he had made a pleasant discovery, which he would communicate

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communicate to me, on condition that I should kept it secret; because it regarded dame Lorenza Sephora, whose resentment (he said) he was afraid of incurring. I was too eager to hear what he had to fay, not to promife fecrecy; but without seeming to be the least concerned, I asked him, with all the indifference I could affect, what the discovery was with which he intended to entertain me. renza, (faid he,) every evening, privately admits into her apartment the furgeon of the village, a very stout young fellow, and the rogue always remains with her a considerable time. I am willing to believe (added he, with a fatirical fmile) that this behaviour may be very innocent; but you must allow, that a young man, who flips fo mysteriously into a maid's chamber, gives a handle to scandal to be very free with her character."

Although this report gave me as much pain, as if I had been actually in love, I took care to conceal my vexation. I even constrained myself so much as to laugh at the news that pierced me to the very foul. But I indemnified myself for that constraint, as soon as I faw myself alone. I cursed, I swore, and mused upon the resolution I should take. Some times, despising Lorenza, I proposed to abandon her, without even deigning to come to an explanation with the coquette; and fometimes, imagining that I was bound in honour to banish the surgeon from the house, I formed the design of challenging him to fingle combat: This last refolution B 3 prevailed.

prevailed. I lay in ambush towards the evening, and fure enough perceived my man enter with a mysterious air into the apartment of my duenna. This was necessary to fupport my fury. I went out of the castle. and posted myself on the road by which the gallant must return. Here I waited for him without flinching, and every moment the defire of fighting with him increased. At length, my enemy appeared, and I went forwards fome yards like a drawcanfir; but I don't know how the devil it happened, I found myself all of a sudden seized, like one of Homer's heroes, with an emotion of fear that arrested my steps; and I stood as much confounded as Paris, when he presented himfelf to fight Menelaus. I began to consider my man, who feemed ftrong and vigorous; and his fword appeared to be of an excessive length. All this had its effect upon me; nevertheless, out of a point of honour, or otherwise, though I faw the danger with magnifying eyes; and, in spite of nature, which made obstinate efforts to make me desist, I had the boldness to advance towards the furgeon, and unsheath my rapier.

Surprised at my action, he cried, "What is the matter, Mr Gil Blas? What is the meaning of these demonstrations? You are pleased to be merry, I suppose." "No, Mr Barber, (I replied,) you are mistaken; I am in a very serious humour, and want to know whether or not you are as brave as gallant. You must not expect that I will let you possess in tran-

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quillity the favours of the lady whom you visit at the castle." " By St Come *! (faid the furgeon, burfting into a loud laugh,) here is a pleafant adventure. Egad, appearances are very deceitful." From these words, imagining that he was as little inclined to fight as I, I became more infolent, and faid, "Friend, that won't pass; don't think that I will be fatisfied with a fimple denial." I fee then, (answered he,) that I shall be obliged to speak, in order to prevent the mischief which might happen to you or me; and I must reveal a secret, although people of our profession cannot be too discreet. If Dame Lorenza admits me by flealth into her apartment, it is with a view of concealing her distemper from the servants: she has an inveterate cancer in her back, which I dress every evening. This is the cause of the visits which alarm you; fo that you may henceforth keep your heart at ease. Tho' (added he) if you are not fatisfied with this declaration, but absolutely bent upon coming to points, fpeak the word; I am your man." So faying, he drew his long rapier, which made me shiver; and put himself upon his guard. " Enough, (faid I to him, sheathing my fword,) I am not a brute, to refuse to hear reason; after what you have told me, you are no longer my enemy; let us embrace."

At this discourse, which shewed him that I was not such a devil as I at first appeared

St Come was a physician and martyr; therefore not improperly invoked by the surgeon.

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to be, he laughed, put up his rapier, gave me his hand; and, in short, we parted the

best friends in the world.

From that moment, Sephora presented nothing but disagreeable ideas to my imagina. tion. I avoided every opportunity she gave me of conversing with her in private; and that with fuch care and affectation, that she perceived my difgust. Astonished at such a change, the resolved to know the cause; and, at length, finding an occasion to speak with me apart, " Mr Steward, (faid she,) pray tell me, why you avoid the fight of me? 'Tis true, I made some advances, but you made fuitable returns. Recollect, if you please, the private conversation we had together. You was then all fire, but now you are all ice. What is the meaning of all this?" This was a very delicate question for a plain man; confequently, it embarraffed me not a little. I don't remember the answer which I made; but it displeased very much, and that was enough. Sephora, though by her sweet modest air, one would have taken her for a lamb, was a very tygress when her wrath prevailed. " I thought (faid she, darting at me a look full of spite and rage) that I did a great deal of honour to a little fellow like you, in discovering to him those sentiments which noble cavaliers would have gloried in exciting; but I am justly punished for having unworthily abased them to a wretched adventurer." Had she stopped here, I should have thought myself cheaply quit. Her tongue, obedient

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obedient to her fury, honoured me with an hundred epithets, every one more bitter than another. I ought to have heard them in cold blood, and reflected, that, in difdaining the triumph of her virtue, which I had attempted, I committed a crime that no woman can forgive. But I was too paffionate to bear reproaches, at which a fenfible man, in my place, would have laughed: and my patience forfaking me, " Madam, faid I,) we ought not to despise any body. If those noble cavaliers, of whom you speak, had feen your back, I am fure their curiofiy would have proceeded no farther." I had no fooner uttered this repartee, than the furious duenna gave me the rudest box on the ear that ever an affronted woman bestowed. I did not wait for a second; but, by a speedy flight, avoided a shower of blows, that would certainly have fallen upon my carcafe.

I thanked heaven, when I found myself extricated out of this troublesome affair; and imagined I had nothing more to fear, since the lady had revenged herself. I thought that, for her own honour, she would never mention the adventure: and, indeed, sisteen days elapsed before I heard anything of the matter. I myself began to forget it, when I understood that Sephora was ill. I was humane enough to be afflicted at the news. I pitied the lady; and believing that, not being able to overcome a passion so ill requited, she had fallen a victim to her unhappy love; I reslected,

with

with forrow, that I was the cause of her indisposition; and at least lamented the duenna, if I could not love her. How much was I mistaken in my opinion! Her tenderness changed into hate; and, at that time, her

whole study was to do me mischief.

One morning, being alone with Don Alphonfo, and observing that young gentleman pensive and sad, I begged, in a respectful manner, to know the cause. "I am chagrined (faid he) to find Seraphina weak, ungrateful, and unjust. You are astonished at this information, (added he) perceiving that I listened with surprise,) and yet nothing is more true. I don't know what cause you may have given Dame Lorenza to hate you; but you are affuredly become fo odious to her, that if you don't leave the castle with the utmost dispatch, her death, she says, will be inevitable. You ought not to doubt that Seraphina, who has a regard for you, at first revolted against a hate which she could not gratify, without injustice and ingatitude. But, in short, she is a woman. She has a tender affection for Sephora, who brought her up; and that governante is a fort of a mother to her, whose death she would reproach berfelf with, if the was not weak enough to fatisfy this her defire: as for my part, notwithstanding the love that attaches me to Seraphina, I shall never have the base complaifance to adhere to her fentiments on this fubject. Perish all the duennas in Spain, before I consent to the removal of a young man whom

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whom I consider more as a brother than a domestic."

Alphonso having spoke thus, I said to him, "Signor, I am born to be the sport of sortune. I thought she would have ceased to persecute me in your house, where every thing flattered me with quiet and happy days: but how agreeable soever my situation may be, I find I must give it up." "Not at all! (cried the generous son of Don Cæsar); leave me to make Seraphina hear reason. It shall never be said, that you have been sacrificed to the caprice of a duenna, to whom too much consideration has been paid in other respects."

"Sir, (faid I), you will only provoke Seaphina, in relifting her will. I had much rather retire, than by a longer stay in this place, un the risk of breeding any division between uch a happy pair. That would be a misforune for which I should never be consoled."

Don Alphonso forbade me to take any such resolution; and I saw him so fixed in he design of supporting me, that Lorenza would unboubtedly have met with a rebuss, if I had been minded to oppose her. At certain times, being piqued against the duenna, was tempted to expose her; but when I ame to consider, that in revealing her hame, I should stab the heart of a poor reature whose indisposition I was the occation of; and that two incurable distempers visibly conducted her to the grave, my retentment was changed into compassion, and I concluded, that since I was such a dangerous

dangerous mortal, I ought in conscience to re-establish, by my retreat, the tranquillity of the castle. This resolution I executed the very next morning before day, without bidding adieu to my two masters, lest, through friendship for me, they should oppose my departure. I contented myself with leaving in my chamber a writing, wherein was contained an exact account of my administration.

CHAP. II.

The fate of Gil Blas, after he quitted the castle of Leyva, and the happy consequence that attended the bad success of his amours.

Was mounted on a good horse of my own, with two hundred piftoles in my portmanteau, the best part of which I had got by the banditti-whom we flew, and the share of the three thousand ducats which had been stolen from Samuel Simon; for Don Alphonso, without making me restore what I had fingered, had made restitution of the whole fum out of his own pocket. Wherefore, confidering my effects as wealth become lawful, I enjoyed it without fcruple. I was in possession of a fund, therefore, which did not allow me to be much concerned for the future, over and above the confidence which one of my age always has in his own merit. Besides, l'oledo presented an agreeable afylum; for I did not at all doubt, that the Count de Polan would be pleased with an opportunity of obliging one of his deliverers

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deliverers with a kind reception, and an apartment in his house. But this nobleman I looked upon as my last rescurce, and refolved, before I should apply to him, to foend part of my money in travelling through the kingdoms of Murcia and Grenada, which I longed particularly to fee. With this defign, I fet out for Almanza, when cecontinuing my journey, I went from city to city as far as * Grenada, without meeting with any bad accident. Fortune, fatisfied with having played me fo many tricks, feemed willing at length to leave me in quiet: but for all that, she was then hatching a great many more, as will be feen in the fequel. One of the first persons I met in the streets of Grenada, was Signor Don Fernand de Leyva. who was, as well as Don Alphonfo, fon-inaw to the count de Polan. We were equally surprised at seeing one another in that place. Gil Blas, (cried he) how came you to be n this city! What bufiness brings you hiher?": " Signor, (faid I) if you are aftonished to see me in this country, you will be much more fo, when you hear the cause of my quitting the fervice of Signor Don Cæfar and his fon." Then I recounted all that had passed between Sephora and me, without the east disguise. He laughed heartily at the adventure; then growing ferious again, "Friend VOL. HI.

Grenada, the capital of the kingdom that bears the same name, is the largest and most pleasant city in Spain, built on the banks of the river Darro; the seat of a samous university, and see of an archbishop.

(faid he) I offer you my mediation in this affair, and will write to my fifter-in-law. "By no means, Signor, (faid I, interrupting 'him) pray don't write; for I did not leave the castle of Leyva with any intention to re-Make, if you please, another use of the regard you have for me; and if any one of your friends has occasion for a secretary or fleward, I beg you will fpeak to him in my favour. I dare affure you, that you shall have no cause to repent of your recommendation." "With all my heart, (he replied) I will do what you defire: I am come to Grenada to visit an old aunt who is fick. and I shall stay here three weeks longer; at the end of which, I shall set out on my return to my castle of Lorqui, where I have left Iulia. I lodge here (added he, shewing me a house about an hundred yards from us) come and call for me some hours hence; by which time, perhaps, I shall have discovered some suitable post for you."

And, indeed, at our very next meeting, he faid, "The archbishop of Grenada, my kinsman and friend, wants a young man of letters, possessed fair copies of his writings: for he is a great author, has composed a vast number of homilies, and studies more every day, which he pronounces with applause. As I believe you are such an one as he wants, I proposed you to him, and he has promised to take you into his service. Go and present yourself to him, in my name; and you may judge, by the reception which

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you shall receive, whether or not I have

spoke in your behalf.

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This was just such a place as I desired: wherefore, having dressed to the best advantage, in order to appear before that prelate, I repaired one morning to the archbishop's palace. Here, was I to imitate the authors of romance, I should give a pompous description of this episcopal palace of Grenada: I would enlarge upon the structure of the building, extol the richness of the furniture, describe the statues and pictures, and not spare the readers the least tittle of the stories they represented: but I shall content myself with observing, that it equalled the royal palace in magnificence.

I found in the apartments a crowd of ecclefiaftics, and gentlemen of the fword, the greatest part whereof were the officers of his grace: his almoners, his gentlemen, his ushers, and valers de chambre. The laity were, almost all, so superbly dressed, that one would have taken them for noblemen rather than domestics, by their haughty looks, and affectation of being men of consequence. While I beheld them, I could not help laughing, and ridiculing them within myself. "Egad, (faid I) these people are very happy in bearing the yoke of servitude without feeling it; for, in short, if they felt it, I imagine that their behaviour would be less assuming." Addressing myself to a grave jolly personage, that stood at the door of the archbishop's closet, in order to open and shut it when there

there was occasion, I asked civilly if I could not speak with his grace. "Wait, (said he drily) till his grace comes out to go to mass, and he will give you a moment's audience in passing." I armed myself with patience, and endeavoured to enter into conversation with some of the officers: but they began to examine me from head to foot, without deigning to speak one syllable; and then looked at one another, smiling with distain, at the liberty which I had taken to mingle in their discourse. I was, I own, quite disconcerted at seeing myself treated in this manner by valets; and had scarce recollected myself from the consusion in which I was, when the closet-door opened, and the archbishop appeared.

Immediately a profound filence prevailed among his officers, who, all of a sudden, laid aside their insolent carriage, and assumed a respectful look in presence of their master. This prelate was in his sixty and minth year, pretty much of the make of my uncle the canon Gil Perez; that is, plump and short: he was very much bandy legged into the bargain, and so bald, that he had only a small tust of hair remaining on the back part of his head; for which reason, he was obliged to cover his head in a sine woollen cap with long ears. In spite of all that, I observed in him the air of a man of quality; doubtless, because I knew him to be one. We common people look upon all your great noblemen with a preposiession that

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that often gives them an air of greatness which nature has refused.

The archbishop immediately advancing towards me, asked what I wanted, with a voice full of sweetness: and I told him, that I was the young man of whom Don Fernand de Leyva had spoke to him. He gave me no time to proceed; but cried, "O! you are the person then of whom he spoke so handsomely. I retain you in my service: you are a valuable acquisition. You may ftay where you are." So faying, he went out, supported by two ushers, after having heard fome clergymen, who had fomething to communicate. Scarce was he out of the room, when the fame officers who disclained my conversation, now courted it. They furrounded me, and with the utmost complaifance expressed their joy, at seeing me become a commensal officer of the palace. Having heard what their master said to me, they had a longing defire to know on what footing I was retained: but I was fo malicious as to baulk their curiofity, in revenge for their contempt.

His grace, returning in a little time, made me follow him into his closet, that he might talk with me in private. I concluded, that his design in so doing, was to try my understanding; and, accordingly, kept myself on my guard, and was resolved to weigh every word before I should speak it. He first of all examined me, on what is called humanity; and I did not answer amis: he had occasion

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to fee, that I was pretty well acquainted with the Greek and Latin authors. He then put me upon logic, where I expected him. and found me quite master of that subject. "Your education (faid he to me, with fome furprise) has not been neglected : let us now fee your hand-writing." I thereupon took out of my pocket a sheet, which I had brought for the purpose : and the prelate seemed very well pleafed with my performance. "I am fatisfied with your hand, (cried he) and still more with your understanding. I shall thank my nephew Don Fernand, for having given me fuch an able young man, whom I look upon as a real present."

Being interrupted by the arrival of some noblemen of Grenada, who came to dine with the archbishop, I left them together, and withdrew among the officers, who were quite profuse in their complaisance to me. I went to dinner with them at the usual time; and if they observed me at table, I did not fail to examine them also. What sagacity there is in the exteriors of churchmen! To me they appeared all faints; fo much was my mind over-awed by the place where I was: and I did not so much as suspect, that there could be any falle money in the cafe; as if no fuch thing was even feen a-

mong the princes of the church.

Being seated by an old valet de chambre, whose name was Melchior de la Ronda, he took great care to help me to the choice bits; and this attention which he expressed for me,

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inspiring me with a respect for him, he was charmed with my polite behaviour. "Signior cavalier, (faid he foftly to me, after dinner) I want to have some private conversation with you." At the same time, he carried me to a part of the palace, where nobody could overhear us; and there talked to me in this manner: "Son, from the very first moment in which I saw you, I felt an inclination for you: of this I will give you a certain proof, by imparting fomething which may be of great advantage to you. You are here in a family, where true and alse devotees live pell mell; so that it will be an infinite time before you can, of yourfelf, be acquainted with the ground. But I will spare you such a tedious and disagreeble fludy, by discovering the characters of both; after which you may the more eafily conduct yourself.

"I will begin (added he) with his grace, who is a very pious prelate, incessantly employed in edifying and reforming the people, by sermons of his own composition, full of excellent morals. He quitted the court about twenty years ago, in order to devote himself entirely to his zeal for his slock. He is a earned man and a great orator, whose sole bleasure consists in preaching, and his hearns are ravished with admiration. Perhaps there is a little vanity in the case: but besides that, it does not belong to man to penetrate the heart; it would be ungrateful in me to inquire into the faults of a person whose

whose bread I eat. If I was permitted to disapprove of any thing in my master, I would blame his feverity. Instead of making an allowance for ecclefiaftical foibles, he punishes them with too much rigour: in particular, he profecutes, without mercy, those who, relying on their innocence, attempt to justify themselves in a legal manner, in contempt of his authority. I observe another fault, which is common to him with a great many people of quality: although he loves his domestics, he makes no consideration for their fervices, but lets them grow old, without ever thinking of procuring for them fome fmall fettlement. If he gives them gratifications fometimes, they owe them folely to the goodness of somebody who has spoken in their behalf: for it would never come into his head to provide for them otherwife."

This is what the old valet de chambre told me of his master; and he afterwards communicated his thoughts of the clergymen with whom we had dined: pictures which but ill agreed with their external deportment. Indeed, he did not represent them as dishonest men, but only as bad priests; excepting some, however, whose virtue he very much extolled. I was no longer at a loss how to regulate my features among those gentlemen: that very evening at supper, I, like them, assumed a sage aspect; a task that costs nothing: so that we must not wonder that there are so many hypocrites in the world.

CHAP.

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CHAP. III.

Cil Blas becomes the favourite of the archbifbop, and the canal of his bounty.

Had been in the afternoon, to fetch my baggage and horse from the inn where I ad lodged; after which I returned to super at the palace, where I found a very handome chamber, and a down-bed, prepared or me. His grace ordered me to be called arly next morning; and gave me a homily b transcribe, injoining me to copy it with all offible exactness. This I performed minutely, ithout having forgot either accent, point, or comma; fo that the joy he expressed was lingled with furprife. "Good Heaven! ried he, in a transport, when he had survey-I all the sheets of my copy) was ever any ring feen fo correct? You transcribe fo well hat you must certainly understand grammar. ell me ingenuously, my friend, have you found nothing that shocked you in writing it over? Some neglect, perhaps, in the stile, or mproper term?" "O, Sir, (answered I, with an air of modesty) I am not learned eough to make critical observations: and if was, I am persuaded that the works of our grace would escape my censure." The relate smiled at my reply; and, though he aid nothing, difcovered through all his piey, that he was a downright author.

By this kind of flattery, I entirely gained is good graces, became more and more dear

to him every day; and at length understood from Don Fernand, who visited him very often, that I was fo much beloved, I might look upon my fortune as already made. This my master himself confirmed to me, a little time after, on the following occasion. One evening he repeated in his closet, when I was present, with great enthusiasm, an homily which he intended to pronounce the next day in the cathedral; and, not fatisfied with asking my opinion of it in general, obliged me to fingle out the particular passages which I most admired. I had the good luck to mention those that he himself looked upon to be the best, his own favourite morceaus: by which means I passed, in his judgment, for a man who had a delicate knowledge of the true beauties of a work." "This is (cried he) what is called having tafte and fentiment: Well, friend, I affure thee, thou hast not got Bœotian ears." In a word, he was so well fatisfied with me, that he pronounced, with fome vivacity, "Gil Blas, henceforth give thyself no uneafiness about thy fortune: I undertake to make it extremely agreeable; I love thee; and, as a proof of my affection, make thee my confident."

I no sooner heard these words, than I sell at his grace's feet, quite penetrated with gratitude: I heartily embraced his bandy legs, and looked upon myself as a man on the high way to wealth and opulence. "Yes, my child, (resumed the archbishop, whose discourse had been interrupted by my prostration) thou

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halt be the repository of my most secret houghts. Listen with attention to what I am going to fay: my chief pleasure consists in reaching; the Lord gives a bleffing to my homilies: they touch the hearts of finners, make hem feriously reflect on their conduct, and have recourse to repentance. I have fometimes the satisfaction to see a miser terrified by the images which I represent to his avarice, open his treasures, and squander them with a prodigal hand. I have also tore, as it were, the epicurean from his pleasures, filled hermitages with the fons of ambition, and confirmed in her duty the wife who has been haken by the allurements of a feducing lover. These conversions, which are frequent, ought of themselves to excite my study; nevertheless, I will confess my weakness; I propose to myself another reward, a reward which the delicacy of my virtue reproaches me with in vain! I mean the efteem that the world shews for fine polished writing. The honour of beng reckoned a perfect orator has charmed my magination: my performances are thought equally strong and delicate; but I would, of all things, avoid the fault of good authors who write too long, and retire without orfeiting the least tittle of my reputation. Wherefore, my dear Gil Blas, (continued the prelate) one thing that I exact of thy zeal is, whenever thou shalt perceive my pen mack of old age, and my genius flag, don't fail to advertise me of it: for I don't trust to my own judgment, which may be feduced

by felf-love. That observation must proceed from a difinterested understanding, and I make choice of thine, which I know is good, refolved to stand to thy decision." "Thank Heaven, Sir, (faid I) that period is far off: belides, a genius like that of your grace will preferve its vigour much better than any o. ther; or, to speak more juffly, will be always the same. I look upon you as another Cardinal Ximenes, whose superior genius, instead of being weakened by age, seemed to receive new strength from it." " No flattery, friend, (said he, interrupting me) I know I am liable to fink all at once : people at my age begin to feel infirmities, and the infirmities of the body often affect the understanding. I repeat it to thee again, Gil Blas, as foon as thou shalt judge mine in the least impaired, be fure to give me notice; and be not afraid of speaking freely and fincerely, for I shall receive thy advice as a mark of thy affection. Besides, thy interest is concerned; if, unhappily for thee, it hould come to my ears, that the public fays my discourses have no longer their wonted force, and that it is high time for me to repole mylelf; I frankly declare, that thou that lofe my friendship, as well as the fortune I have promised. Such will be the fruit of thy foolish telerve!"

Here my patron left off speaking, in order to hear my reply, which was a promise to behave according to his desire. From that moment he concealed nothing from me. I

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became his favourite: an event which none of his domestics, except Melchior de la Ronda, could perceive without envy. It was a diverting scene to behold the manner in which the gentlemen and squires then lived with the confident of his grace: they were not ahamed to be guilty of grovelling meannetles, in order to captivate my good will. Licould fcarce believe they were Spaniards; though did them good offices, without being the dupe of their felfish complainance. His grace he archbishop, at my request, exerted himfelf in their favour: to one he procured a company, and put him in a condition to make a figure in the army. Another he fent o Mexico, to take possession of a considerable post which he had obtained for him; and my friend Melchior, through my means, enjoyed a handsome gratification. This condescension convinced me, that though the prelate did not anticipate people's desires, he rarely refused any favour that was asked.

But what I did for a certain priest deserves, in my opinion, to be told. One day,
a licentiate, whose name was Lewis Garcia,
young man of a very good appearance,
vas presented to me by our steward; who
aid, "Signior Gil Blas, this honest clergynan is one of my best friends; he was chaplain of a nunnery; and his virtue has not
scaped scandal: some people have done him
ill offices with his grace, who has suspended
him, and is unhappily so much prejudiced
against him, that he will listen to no soliciVol. III.

tation in his behalf. We have employed, to no purpose, all the persons of rank in Grenada, to beg that he may be re-established; but our master is quite inflexible."

Gentlemen, (faid I) you have gone the wrong way to work; it would have been better for Mr Licentiate if no folicitation had been made: for in their endeavours to ferve him, they have done him a manifest injury. I am well acquainted with his grace; entreaties and recommendations ferve only to aggravate, in his opinion, the fault of an ecclefiaftion It was but t'other day I heard him fay to himself, " The more people a priest, who has been guilty of irregularity, engages to speak to me in his behalf, the more is the scandal augmented, and the more feverity do I exercise." " That is unfortunate (replied the steward,) and my friend would be very much embarrassed, if he was not bleffed with a good hand: happily for him, he writes to admiration; and, by the help of that talent, keeps himself out of difficulties? I was curious to fee if this writing, fo much extolled, was much better than tny own: and the licentiate, who had a fpecimen in his pocket, thewed me a page that I admired very much; for it looked like a writing mafter's copy. While I confidered this beautiful performance, a thought coming into my head, I defired Garcias to leave the paper, telling him that I might possibly make some use of it, that would turn out to his advantage; that I could not explain myfelf

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in elf myself at that time, but would next day tell him more of the matter. The licentiate, to whom, in all probability, the steward had made an eulogium of my genius, withdrew as much fatisfied as if he had been already reinstated in his office. I was truly desirous that he might be so; and that same day laboured for him in the following manner: Being alone with the archbishop, I shewed him the writing of Garcias, with which my patron feemed quite charmed: then laying hold of the opportunity, " Sir, (faid I to him,) since you won't cause your homilies o be printed, I wish they were at least writen in this hand." " I am fatisfied with thine (answered the prelate,) but I own, I hould not be forry to have a copy of my work in that hand." "Your grace (I reolied) has nothing to do but to speak: the man who paints fo well is a licentiate of my acquaintance who will be ravished to do that service for you, the more, because by these means he may interest your goodness, in extricating him from the melanchoy fituation in which he has the misfortune to be at prefent." It is inamphal wonder.

The prelate did not fail to ask the name of the licentiate: upon which I said, "He is called Lewis Garcias, and is in despair on account of having incurred your displeasure."

That Garcias (said he, interrupting me,) was, if I am not mistaken, chaplain to a convent of nuns, and lies under the censure of the church: I remember some informa-

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tions that I received against him: his morals are but indifferent." "Sir, (faid I, interfupting him in my turn,) I will not undertake to justify him; but I know he has enemies; and pretends, that the authors of these informations which you have feen, were more bent upon doing him ill offices, than on telling the truth." " That may be (replied the archbishop,) there are abundance of very dangerous dispositions in this world! Besides, granted that his conduct has not been always irreproachable, he may have repented of his misbehaviour; and, in thort, there is mercy for every transgression. Bring the licentiate hither; I take off his fuspension."

Thus it is, that the most severe men abate of their feverity, when more dear felf-interest is concerned. The archbishop granted, without difficulty, to the vain pleasure of having his works well writ, that which he had refused to the most powerful solicitations. I carried the news immediately to the steward, who imparted them to his friend Garcias, who the very next day, coming to make an acknowledgment of thanks fuitable to the favour obtained, I presented him to my mafter, who contented himself with reprimanding him flightly, and gave him the homilies to transcribe. Garcias acquitted himself so well, that he was re-established in his miniftry, and even obtained the living of Gabia, a large market-town in the neighbourhood

of Grenada.

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CHAP. IV.

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The archbishop is seized with a fit of the apoplexy.

The dilemma in which Gil Blas found himself,
and the method he took to be extricated.

WHILE I thus bestowed my services on different people, Don Fernand being about to leave Grenada, I visited that nobleman before his departure, in order to thank him a-new for the excellent post which e had procured for me. I appeared to him o well fatisfied with my condition, that he aid, "My dear Gil Blas, I am ravished to and thee so well pleased with my uncle the archbishop." "I am charmed with him (I replied,) and shall never be able to shew myelf grateful enough for his generolity to me. Nothing less could have confoled me for the of of Don Cæfar and his fon." "I am persuaded (answered he) that they are both extremely mortified at your absence; but, perhaps, you are not separated for ever: fortune may one day bring you together aain." Melted by these words, I sighed, ind found at that instant my love for Don Alphonso so great, that I would have wilingly abandoned the archbishop, with all he agreeable hopes he had given me, to return to the castle of Leyva, if the obstacle hat banished me from it had been removed. Don Fernand perceived the emotions of my foul, which pleased him so much, that he embraced me with affection, and affured me

that his whole family would always bear a

part in my destiny.

Two months after this gentleman's departure, in the very zenith of my favour, we had a hot alarm in the episcopal palace: The archbishop was seized with a fit of the apoplexy; he was, however, fuccoured immediately, and fuch falutary medicines administered, that in a few days his health was re-established: but his understanding had received a rude shock, which I plainly perceived in the very next discourse which he composed. I did not, however, find the difference between this and the rest fo fenfible, as to make me conclude, that the orator began to flag; and waited for another homily to fix my refolution. This, indeed, was quite decifive; fometimes the good old prelate repeated the fame thing over and over; fometimes rose too high, or funk too low: it was a vague discourse, the rhetoric of an old professor, a mere capucinade *.

I was not the only person who took notice of this: the greatest part of the audience, when he pronounced it, as if they had been also hired to examine it, said softly to one another, "This sermon smells strong of the apoplexy." "Come, master homily critic (said I then to myself,) prepare to do your office: you see that his grace begins to fail: it is your duty to give him notice of it, not only as the depository of his thoughts, but

MIRCWHO,

^{*} Capucinade. A farcasm on the fermons of the capuchins, which are not remarkable for correctness of composition.

likewise, lest some one of his friends should be free enough with him to prevent you: in that case you know what would happen: your name would be erazed from his last will, in which there is, doubtless, a better legacy provided for you than the library of the licentiate Sedillo.

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After these reflections, I made others of quite contrary nature. To give the notice in question, seemed a delicate point: I imagined that it might be ill received by an author like him, conceited of his own works; but rejecting this suggestion, I represented to myself, that he could not possibly take it amis, after having exacted it of me in so pressing a manner. Add to this, that I depended upon my being able to mention it with address, and make him swallow the pill without reluctance. In a word, finding that I ran a greater risque in keeping silence than in breaking it, I determined to speak.

The only thing that embarrassed me now, was how to break the ice. Luckily, the oraor himself extricated me from that distinctly, by asking what people said of him, and if
hey were satisfied with his last discourse. I
nswered, that his homilies were always admired; but, in my opinion, the last had not
succeeded so well as the rest, in affecting the
sudience. "How, friend! (replied he, with
astonishment) has it met with any Aristarthus *?" "No, Sir, (said I,) by no means:

^{*} Ariftarchus, a great critic in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

fuch works as yours are not to be criticized; every body is charmed with them. Nevertheless, since you have laid your injunctions upon me, to be free and sincere, I will take the liberty to tell you, that your last discourse, in my judgment, has not altogether the energy of your other performances. Are

not you of the same opinion?"

My mafter grew pale at these words; and faid, with a forced smile, "So then, Mr Gil Blas, this piece is not to your tafte?" "I don't fay fo, Sir, (cried I, quite disconcerted:) I think it excellent, although a little inferior to your other works." " I understand you, (he replied) you think I flag, don't you? Come, be plain: you believe it is time for me to think of retiring." -" I should not have been so bold (faid I) as to speak so freely, if your grace had not commanded me: I do no more, therefore, than obey you: and I most humbly beg that you will not be offended at my freedom." "God forbid (cried he, with precipitation,) God forbid that I should find fault with it. In so doing, I should be very unjust. I don't at all take it ill that you speak your sentiment; it is your fentiment only that I find bad. I have been most egregiously deceived in your

Though I was disconcerted, I endeavoured to find some mitigation, in order to set things to rights again: but how is it possible to appease an incensed author, one especially who has been accustomed to hear himself praised?

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Say no more, my child, said he; you are yet too raw to make proper distinctions. Know, that I never composed a better homily than that which you disapprove; for my genius (thank heaven) hath, as yet, lost nothing of its vigour. Henceforth I will make a better choice of a consident, and keep one of greater ability than you. Go, added he, pushing me by the shoulders out of his closet) go tell my treasurer to give you an hundred ducats, and may heaven onduct you with that sum. Adieu, Mr. Gil Blas, I wish you all manner of prospetty, with a little more taste."

CHAP. V.

The step that Gil Blas took after the archbishop had dismissed him. His accidental meeting with the licentiate, who had been so much obliged to him; with the gratitude of that priest.

Went out of the closet, cursing the caprice, or rather weakness, of the archbishop, and more enraged against him than afflicted at the loss of his favour. I even doubted some time, if I should go and touch my hundred encats; but after mature deliberation, I was not fool enough to refuse them. I considered, that this money would not deprive me of the right of ridiculing the prelate; in which I was resolved not to be wanting, as often as his homilies should be brought upon the carpet, in my presence.

I went, therefore, and demanded the hundred ducats of the treasurer, without mentioning

tioning a fingle word of what had happened between his mafter and me: and went after wards in quest of Melchior de la Ronda, to bid him an eternal adieu. He loved me too much to be infensible of my misfortung which, while I recounted, I perceived that grief was painted on his countenance. In spite of all the respect he owed the archbi shop, he could not help blaming his behaviour. But, as I fwore in my rage, that the prelate should pay for it, and that I would make the whole town merry at his expence the fage Melchior faid to me, " Believe me, my dear Gil Blas, you had better suppress your resentment. People of an inferior rank ought always to respect persons of quality. whatever cause they may have given them to complain. There are, I own, some very mean noblemen, who scarce deserve the least confideration; but, as they have the power of doing mischief, they are to be feared."

I thanked the old valet de chambre for his good advice, which I promifed to observe "If you go (said he) to Madrid, you shall visit Joseph Navarro my nephew, who is clerk of the kitchen to Signor Don Balthazar de Zuniga, and, I dare say, a young man worthy of your friendship, frank, brisk, obliging and forward to serve his friends: I wish that he and you may become acquainted." I answered, that I would not fail to wait of this Joseph Navarro, on my first arrival at Madrid, whither I was determined to go.

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then quitted the archbishop's palace, with an intent never to set foot in it again. If I had still been in possession of my horse, I should have perhaps set out immediately for Toledo; but I had sold him while I was in favour, believing that I should have no further occasion for his service. I hired a furnished mom, resolving to stay a month at Grenada, and then repair to the Count de Polan.

As dinner-time approached, I asked of my landlady, if there was not an eating-house in the neighbourhood; and the answering, that here was an excellent one a few steps from her house, where there was very good accommodation, and a great deal of good company, I made her shew me the place, and going ther a little after, was directed into a large all, which bore some resemblance to a reftory. Ten or twelve people fat at a large ble, covered with a dirty cloth, converfing with one another, while every one ate his own little portion. My mess was likewise brought, which, at another time, would, doubtless, have made me regret the table I had lost: but I was then so much piqued ainst the archbishop, that the scanty alwance of my eating-house seemed preferto the good cheer I had enjoyed in his palace. I condemned a variety of dishes, and arguing like the doctor of Vallado-In, Unhappy are those, (said I to myself) who frequent such pernicious tables, where one must continually be on his guard aminst sensuality, for fear of overloading his stomach.

ftomach. Can one eat too little? In my ill humour, I praifed these very aphorisms I

had hitherto very much neglected.

While I dispatched my commons, with out fear of exceeding the bounds of temperance, the licentiate Lewis Garcias, now become vicar of Gabia, in the manner already related, came into the hall. He no fooner perceived me, than he came running to falute me with the utmost eagerness, or rather with all the expressions of excessive joy. He hugged me close, and I was obliged to undergo a very long compliment on the fervice I had done him. He fatigued me with his demonstrations of gratitude. "Fore gad, my dear patron, fince I have had the good fortune to meet you here, we fhan't part without a glass; but as there is no good wine in this eating-house, I will carry you, if you please, after our scanty repast, to a place where I will treat you with a bottle of fine dry Lucena, and a glass of fine Muscadine of Foncarrel. We must certainly commit that debauch. I wish I had the happiness of enjoying you a few days only, at my parsonage of Gabia. There you should be received like a generous Mecenas, to whom I owe the quiet and easy life I lead."

While he talked to me in this manner, his allowance was served, and he went to work, without ceasing, however, to entertain me, at intervals, with something which he thought would flatter my vanity. I laid hold of this opportunity

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opportunity to speak in my turn; and as he did not forget to enquire about his friend the steward, I made no mystery of my leaving the archbishop's service. I even related to him the most minute circumstances of my difgrace, to which he liftened with great attention. After what he had faid to me. who would not have expected to hear him, penetrated with the most grateful forrow, exclaim against the archbishop? But this was the farthest thing from his thoughts. grew indifferent and pensive, finished his dinner without speaking a word, then rising fuddenly from table, bid me good b'w'ye, in a cool manner, and disappeared. The ungrateful wretch, feeing me no longer in a condition to serve him, spared himself even the trouble of concealing his fentiments. I. laughed at his ingratitude; and looking at him with all the contempt he deferved, called to him aloud, that I might be heard, " Holloa! you fage chaplain of nuns, go and give orders to cool that delicious wine of Lucena, with which you have promifed to regale me."

CHAP. VI.

Gil Blas goes to see a play at Grenada. His astonishment at the sight of one of the actresses, and the consequences of that event.

CARCIAS was no fooner out of the hall, than two well dreffed cavaliers came in and fat down by me. They began to talk Vol. III.

of the players of the Grenada company, and of a new comedy which was then on the stage. This piece, according to their discourse, made a great noise in the city; and I resolved to go and see it that very day; for I had not been at a play since my arrival at Grenada. As I had almost all the time lived in the archbishop's palace, where that diversion was anathematized, I had taken care not to indulge that pleasure, but amused myself entirely with my master's homilies.

I repaired, therefore, at the proper time, to the play-house, where I found a numerous affembly; overheard, all around me, differtations on the piece, before it began, and observed that every body undertook to criticise it. One person declared himself for, another against the performance. "Was there ever a work better composed?" faid one on my right. " What a pitiful stile!" cried one on my left. Truly, if there are a good many bad authors it must be allowed there are still a greater number of wretched critics; and when I confider the mortifications that dramatic poets must undergo, I am astonished that there are any so bold as to brave the ignorance of the multitude, and the dangerous censure of witlings, who fometimes corrupt the judgment of the

At length, the Gracioso * presented bimself to open the scene. He was saluted, on his first appearance, with a general clap; by which

be co

^{*} A favourite actor.

I perceived that he was one of those spoiled actors, in whom the pit pardons every thing. And, indeed, this player did not speak one word, nor perform one gesture, without attracting applause. The audience made him too sensible of the pleasure they had in seeing him on the stage; and he abused their favour accordingly. I perceived that he sometimes forgot himself in the middle of a scene, and put their prepossession in his behalf to too severe a proof: for they would often have done him justice, had they hissed, instead of

extolling him to the skies.

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There was likewife a clapping of hands at the appearance of some other actors, and in particular of an actress, who performed the part of a waiting woman, whom, having confidered with attention, no terms can express my surprise, when I recollected in her the person of Laura, my dear Laura! whom I still believed to be in the fervice of Arfenia at Madrid. I could not doubt that it was she: her shape, her features, the found of her voice, every thing affured me that I was not mistaken. Nevertheless. as if I had mistrusted the evidence of my eyes and ears, I asked her name of a cavalier, who fat by me. "Hey! (faid he) from whence come you? It feems you are just arrived, since you don't know the fair Eftella."

The resemblance was too perfect for me to be deceived by this disguise. I could easily conceive, that Laura, when she changed her E 2 condition.

condition, had also altered her name; and, curious to know her fituation, for the public is generally pretty well acquainted with the affairs of persons in her sphere, I begged to know of the same man, if this Estella had not fome gallant of importance. answered, that a Portuguese nobleman, called the Marquis de Marialva, who had been about two months at Grenada, was at a confiderable expence on her account. might have told me a great deal more, if I had not been afraid of fatiguing him with questions. I was more engroffed by the news which this cavalier had told me, than by the representation of the play; and if any body had asked the subject of the piece, when I came out, he would have embarraffed me not a little. I did nothing but muse upon Laura, or Estella, and firmly resolved to go and visit her next day; though I was not without anxiety about the reception I should meet with. I had reason to believe, that the fight of me would not yield her much pleasure in this brilliant situation of her affairs: nay, I imagined, that fuch a good actress, in order to revenge herself upon one, with whom she had certainly cause to be diffatisfied, would probably disclaim his acquaintance. All this did not diffuade me from my defign of going. After a flight repast, (for such only my eating-house afforded,) I went home to my lodging, where I waited impatiently for the next day. I flept

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I flept little that night, and got up before the fun; but, as I concluded that a nobleman's mistress would not be visible so early, I bent three or four hours in dreffing, shaving, owdering, and perfuming; refolving to preent myself before her, in such a condition, as would give her no cause to blush at seeing me again. I sallied out about ten o'clock, and repaired to her lodging, to which I received direction, at the house where the players lived. She possessed the chief apartment of a large house; the door of which being opened to me by a chambermaid, I told her that wanted to speak with Dame Estella. The maid went in to fignify my defire, and I mmediately heard her mistress pronounce, with a loud voice, "Who is the young man? What does he want? Let him come in." By this I concluded, that I had chosen an unfeafonable time for my visit; that her Portuguese lover was at her toilet; and that her reason for speaking so loud, was to persuade him, that she never received sufpected messages. My conjecture was true; the Marquis de Marialva commonly paffed the morning in her company; and I expected a very disagreeable compliment, when this truly original actress seeing me appear, ran to me with open arms, crying, "Ah! my dear brother! Is it you?" And, with these words, embraced me several times. Then turning to her gallant; " My lord, (faid she,) pardon me for yielding to the force of blood in your presence. After an ab-E 3 ience

42 THE ADVENTURES OF

fence of three years, I cannot behold a brother, whom I tenderly love, without giving him fome marks of my affection. Well, my dear Gil Blas, (continued she, addressing me anew,) tell me some news of my family: In

what condition did you leave it?"

This question embarrassed me at first ; but I foon discovered Laura's intention, and, se conding her artifice, answered, with an au fuited to the scene we had to act, "Thank Heaven, fifter, our parents are in good health." "I don't doubt, (she replied,) that you are aftonished to find me an actress at Grenada: but do not condemn me unheard. Three years ago, as you remember, my father thought he had fettled me to advantage, by giving mein marriage to Captain Dor, Antonio Cœllo, who carried me from the Afturias to Madrid, where he was born. Six months after our arrival in that city, having had an affair of honour brought upon him by his own violent humour, he killed a cavalier, who had taken it in his head to favour me with fome attention. This gentleman being related to persons of great quality and credit, my hufband, who had no interest, fled in to Catalonia, with all the money and jewels he could find in the house; embarked at Barcelona, croffed into Italy, engaged in the service of the Venetians, and at last lost his life in the Morea, fighting against the Turks. In the mean time, our landed estate was confiscated, and I had but a very fmall jointure left. What could I do

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in fuch a troublesome extremity? I could not return into the Asturias. For what purpose go thither? All the consolation I should have received from my family, would have been no more than sympathy and condolence. On the other hand, I had been too well educated to be capable of embracing a life of libertinism? Upon what determination then could I fix? I have turned

actress to preserve my character."

The Marquis de Marialva, who loft not a word of the whole discourse, implicitly beleved every fyllable of what Don Antonio's widow was pleased to utter. He even joind in the conversation, and asked if I was in any business at Grenada or elsewhere. was in some doubt, at that instant, whether or no I should tell a lie; but thinking that unnecessary, I spoke truth, recounting every circumstance of my entering into, and uitting the archbishop's service; which aforded infinite diversion to the Portuguese obleman. It is true, that, notwithstandng my promise to Melchior, I made myself little merry at the expence of his grace. But the most diverting part of the scene vas, that Laura, who thought I invented a ory in imitation of her, burst out into loud ts of laughter, which she would have proably spared, had she known that I did not dissemble.

Having ended my narration, which I finished with the lodging I had hired, word was brought that dinner was on the table.

Upon

Upon which I would have retired, in order to go and dine at my eating-house; but Laura, stopping me, said, "What do you mean, brother! you shall dine with me; and I won't even suffer you to live any longer in a hired room; for I intend you shall both eat and lodge in my house. Or, der your baggage to be brought hither this

evening. I have a bed to spare."

The Portuguese nobleman, who, perhaps was not very well pleafed with this hospital lity, addressing himself to Laura, said, "No. Estella, you have not convenience for him in thefe lodgings. Your brother feems to be a pretty young fellow; and the advantage he has, in being fo dear to you, into rests me in his favour. I will take him in to my fervice: he shall be my favouring fecretary, and chief confident. Let him not fail to come and fleep at my house this very night; for I will order an apartment to be prepared for the purpose. I will allow him a falary of four hundred ducats; and if, in the fequel, I have cause, as I hope I shall to be fatisfied with his behaviour, I will put him in a condition to confole himself for being too fincere with the archbishop."

The acknowledgments which I made to the Marquis at this juncture, were followed by those of Laura, who improved upon mine. So faying, he faluted his theatrica princess, and went away. She led me immediately into a closet, where seeing her self alone with me, "I should burst, (crief

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the,)-if I was obliged to refift any longer the inclination I have to laugh." Then throwing herself into an easy chair, and holding her fides, she laughed immoderately, as if the had loft her fenses. I found it impossible not to follow her example, and when we had indulged ourselves sufficiently, " Confels, Gil Blas, (faid she,) that we have acted a pleasant farce: but I did not expect such a catastrophe; my design being no other than to provide for you a table and lodging in my house; which, that I might over with decency, I made thee pass for my brother. I am ravished that such a good post has occurred to thee by accident. Marquis de Marialva is a generous nobleman, who will even exceed his promise in thy favour. Another (added she) might not, perhaps, have given fuch a gracious reception to one who quits his friends, without bidding them farewell; but I am one of these good creatures, who cannot help feeing again, with pleafure, a rogue whom bey have once loved." I candidly acknowedged my impolite behaviour, for which I ked pardon. She then conducted me ina very handsome dining-room, where we down at table; and, as a waiting-woman and lacquey were prefent, behaved to one another like brother and fifter.

Having dined, we went back to the same doset where we had conversed together before. There my incomparable Laura, giing a loose to all her natural gaiety, demanded

manded an account of all my adventures fince our separation. I made a faithful recital of the whole; and when I had gratified her curiofity, she gave me the same satisfaction, in recounting the following history of herfelf.

CHAP. VII.

The history of Laura.

Am going to relate, as succincily as I can, by what accident I embraced the

profession of a player.

Great events happened, after you left me in fuch an honourable manner. My mistress Arfenia, rather tired than difgusted with the world, renounced the stage, and carried me with her, to a fine estate which she had bought near Zamora, with the price of her favours. In this city we foon contracted an acquaintance; and going thither, frequently, to pass a day or two, came back again, and thut ourselves up in our castle.

In one of these small journies, Don Felix Maldonada, the corregidor's only fon, faw me by accident, and happening to be pleafed with my appearance, fought an opportunity of speaking with me in private, which, that I may conceal nothing from thee, I own, was facilitated by myself. He was a cavalier not yet twenty years old, fair as Love himself, a mere pattern in shape, and still more engaging by his gallant and generous behaviour, than by his person: for he made me an offer of a large brilliant, which

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he had on his finger, with fuch a good grace, and pressing intreaties, that I could not, for my foul, refuse it. I did not possess fuch an amiable gallant with indifference. But what madness is it in Abigails, to attach themselves to the young heirs of perfons in authority; his father, the most fevere of all corregidors, informed of our intelligence, made hafte to prevent the confequences of it, and ordered me to be apprehended by a troop of alguazils, who carried me, regardless of my cries, to the hospital * of compassion. There, without any other form of process, the superior ordered me to be stript of my ring and drefs, and cloathed with a long gown of rey ferge, girded about me with a strap of black leather, from whence a rofary of arge beads hung down to my heels. This eing performed, I was conducted into an all, where I found an old monk, of an order that I did not know, who fell apreaching penitence to me, much in the ame manner as Dame Leonarda exhorted thee to patience in the cavern. He told ne that I was very much obliged to those who caused me to be shut up in that place, or they had done me infinite fervice, in recuing me from the snares of the devil. will frankly own my ingratitude: far from hinking myself beholden to those who had one me the good office, I loaded them with imprecations.

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^{*} In other words, the house of correction:

Eight days I paffed in afflicting myself; but on the ninth, (for I counted the very minutes,) my fate feemed to bear another aspect. Crofling a small court, I met the steward of our house, a person who ruled with unlimited fway; the fuperior herfelf was under his command; and he rendered an account of his stewardship to none but the corregidor, on whom alone he depended. and whose entire confidence he enjoyed. His name was Pedro Zendono: he was born in the town of Sellesdon in Biscay, being a tall, pale, meagre man, whose figure would have ferved as an excellent pattern for the picture of a rank rogue. He scarce seemed to look at the fifters; and, in short, thou never fawest such an hypocritical face, although thou hast lived in an archbishop's palace.

Well then, (faid she,) I met this Signior Zendono, who stopt me, faying, " Daughter, be comforted, I am touched with your misfortune." He faid no more, but went about his business, leaving me to make what commentaries I pleased on such a laconic text. As I believed him to be a good man, I innocently concluded, that he had taken the trouble of examining into the cause of my confinement, and finding me not guilty enough to deferve fuch unworthy treatment, was refolved to do me a good office with the corregidor. I was little acquainted with the Biscayan, who had quite other intentions. He then refolved in his mind the scheme of a journey, which he

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he imparted to me, a few days after. "My dear Laura, (said he,) I am so much affected with your sufferings, that I am resolved to put an end to them immediately. In so doing, I know I shall embrace my own ruin: but I am no longer master of myself. I intend to take you out of prison to-morrow, and conduct you in person to Madrid; being resolved to sacrifice every thing to the

pleafure of being your deliverer."

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I was ready to fwoon with joy, at these words of Zendono, who judging, by my acknowledgments, that I longed for nothing fo much as liberty, had the impudence to carry me off next day, in fight of every body, by the following stratagem. He told the fuperior, that he had orders to bring me to the corregidor, who was at a pleafurehouse two leagues from town; and, with the utmost affurance, made me get into a post-chaife with him, drawn by two good mules, which he had bought for that purpose, and attended by no other servant than a valet, who conducted the chaife, and was entirely devoted to the fleward. We fet out, not for Madrid, as I imagined, but towards the frontiers of Portugal, where we arrived, before the corregidor of Zamora could gen notice of our flight, and fend the beagles of justice in pursuit of us.

Before we entered Braganza, the Bucayan made me put on a fuit of men's clothes, which he had the precaution to provide; and now looking upon me as fairly embarked with Vol. III.

him, faid to me, at the inn where we lodged, " Fair Laura, be not offended with me for bringing you into Portugal: for, the corregidor of Zamora will make fearch for us in our native country, as two criminals to whom Spain ought not to afford a retreat. But (add. ed he) we can shelter ourselves from his refentment in this foreign kingdom, although it be, at prefent under the dominion of the Here we shall, at least, Spanish monarchy. be more fecure than in our own country. Follow, therefore, a man who adores you; and let us fettle at Coimbra, where I will become a fpy for the holy office, and under the shade of that formidable tribunal, our days will fmoothly glide in eafe and pleafure."

Such a forward propofal gave me to-understand, that I had to do with a cavalier, who did not chuse to redress the grievances of damfels, merely for the glory of knight-I perceived that he depended a good deal upon my gratitude, and still more upon my distress. Nevertheless, though these two considerations spoke to me in his behalf, I rejected his proposal with disdain. "Lis true, indeed, I had two strong reasons for fnewing myfelf fo referved: I disliked his person, and distrusted his circumstances. But, when returning to the charge, he offered to wed me, as a preliminary, and shewed me that his flewardship had put him in a condition to enjoy himself for a long time, I won't deny that I began to liften to his addreffes. I was dazzled by the gold and jewels which

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which he spread before me, and sound, by experience, that as many metamorphoses are made by interest as by love. My Biscayan became gradually quite another man in my eyes; his tall withered carcase assumed the form of a fine shape; his pale complexion seemed agreeably fair: and I gave a savourable appellation to his hypocritical look. I hen accepted his hand, without reluctance, in the sace of heaven, which he called to withes our engagement. After this, he suffered no contradiction on my part; we set out again on our travels, and, in a short time, Combra beheld a new family within its walls.

My husband purchased for me some handome clothes adapted to my own fex, and presented me with several diamonds, mong which I recollected that of Don Felix This discovery was sufficient Maldonado. to make me conceive how all the jewels I had feen were acquired, and to persuade me that I had not married a scrupulous observer of the seventh article of the decalogue. But, considering myself as the first cause of his dexterity, I forgave him in my heart: for a woman will excuse even the bad actions which her beauty prompts the men to commit; otherwise, I should have thought him an execrable villain.

I was pretty well fatisfied with him for two or three months, during which he behaved in a gallant manner, and feemed to love me with great tenderness: nevertheless, these marks of affection were false appearances; for

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the rogue cheated me at laft. One morning, on my return from mass, I found nothing at home but bare walls: the whole furniture, with all my baggage, was carried off: Zen. dono, and his faithful valet, had taken their measures so well, that in less than an hour, the general pillage of the house had been begun and finished, in such a manner, that with the clothes only which I had on my back, and the ring of Don Felix, which was luckily on my finger, I faw myfelf abandon. ed by an ungrateful wretch, like another A. riadne. But, I affure thee, I did not amufe myfelf with making elegies on my misfortunes; I rather thanked heaven for having delivered me from fuch a wretch, who could not fail, foon or late, to fall into the hands of justice; and looked upon the days we had fpent together as fo much loft time, for which I would foon make myself amends. been defirous of staying in Portugal, and attaching myself to some lady of fashion, I should not have wanted a place; but, whether I loved my own country, or was influenced by the force of destiny, which prepared a better fortune for me here, I resolved to return to Spain; and applying to a jeweller, who gave me ready money for my ring, fet out with an old Spanish lady, who was going in a chaife to Seville.

This person, whose name was Dorothea, had been to visit one of her relations settled at Coimbra, and was on her return to Seville, where she lived. There was such a sympathy

between

between her disposition and mine, that we became friends the very first day of our journey; and our mutual affection grew fo strong on the road, that, on our arrival, the lady would fuffer me to lodge no where but in I had no cause to repent of my her house. acquaintance, for I never knew a woman of a better character; and one might still perceive, by her features, and the sparkling of her eyes, that in her youth many a guitarre had been thrummed on her account: indeed, fhe was the widow of feveral noble husbands, and lived in an honourable manner on the

jointures which she enjoyed.

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Among other excellent qualities, she had that of being very compassionate to unfortunate young women. When I imparted to her my own story, she entered warmly into my interests, and bestowed a thousand curses on Zendono. "What dogs these men are! (said she, in a tone that made me guess she had met with some steward in her way) persidious wretches! I know there are fuch villains in the world, who divert themselves in deceiving women. What I am pleafed at, my dear child, (added she) is, that, according to your relation, you are no longer bound to that perjured Biscayan: if your marriage with him was good enough to fecure your reputation: by way of recompence, it is also bad enough to permit you to contract a better, whenever you can find an opportunity."

I went abroad every day with Dorothea, either to church, or to vifit; and this being

the way to meet with fome adventure foon, I attracted the notice of feveral cavaliers, who, in order to found the business, made interest with my old landlady: but some had not wherewithal to make a good fettlement, and others were still minors: so that I had not the least defire of listening to any of them. One day, Dorothea and I took a whim of going to fee a play at Seville *; and upon confulting the bill, we found that the players intended to act, La famosa comedia, el embaxador de Si-mismo, composed by Le Vega Carpio.

Among the actreffes who appeared on the stage, I discovered my old friend Phenicia, that jolly merry wench whom thou hast feen, when she was waiting-maid to Florimonda, and with whom thou hast fometimes fupped at Arfenia's house. knew that she had not been in Madrid for two years before, but was ignorant of her being an actress. Having an eager desire of embracing her, I found the piece very tedious; but this might be the fault of the actors, who played either too ill or too

And fo remarkable for curiofities, as to be the fubject of this diffich.

Qui non havisto Sevilla, Non havisto maravilla.

^{*} Seville, fituated on the Guadalaquivir, is the capital of Andalufia, and next to Madrid, the richest city in Spain. feat of an university, archbishop, inquisition, and mint. So ancient that over one of the gates, is the following inscription;

[&]quot; Condidit Alcides, renovavit Julius urbem " Restituit Christo Fernandus tertius hæres.

The translation of which the reader will find, on another occasion, in the fourth volume.

well, to yield me amusement; for as to me, who am a merry creature, I own myself as much diverted by a player who is perfectly ridiculous, as by one who is excellent in his

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At length, the moment I waited for being arrived, that is, the end of La famosa comedia, my widow and I went behind the scenes, where we perceived Phenicia acting the coquet, and listening with affectation to the foft warbling of a young bird, which, it feems had allowed itself to be enfnared by her declamation. She no fooner observed me, than quitting her admirer with a courteous air, she came towards me with open arms, and loaded me with careffes. expressed our mutual joy in seeing one another again; but the time and place not permitting us to launch out in a long conversation, we deferred it till next day, when we might discourse together more fully at her lodgings.

The itch of talking is one of the most eager passions of women: I could not close an eye the whole night, so much did I long to engage Phenicia, and worry her with questions upon questions. God knows, I was not lazy in getting up, to repair to her lodging, according to the direction she had given me. She lived with the whole company in a large hired house; which, when I entered, I met a maid-servant, who, when I desired her to conduct me to Phenicia's apartment, shewed me up to a gallery,

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on one fide of which were ten or twelve fmall chambers, divided from one another by partitions of deal boards only, and possessed by the joyous band. My guide knocked at a door, which Phenicia, whose tongue itched as well as mine, came and opened. Scarce did we allow ourselves time to sit, before we began to chatter. We had a severe brush, and uttered in our turns so many interrogations, that the questions and replies succeeded one another with surpri-

fling volubility.

After having recounted our mutual adventures, and reciprocally informed ourfelves of the state of our affairs, Phenicia asked what I intended to do? I answered, that I was refolved (until fomething better should cast up) to enter into the service of fome young lady of quality. " O fye! (cried my friend) you joke fure! Is it posfible, my dear, that shou art not yet difgusted with servitude? Art thou not tired with feeing thyfelf subjected to another's will, with humouring the caprices of a miftress, with hearing thyself reproached, and, in one word, with being a flave? Why wilt thou not, by my example, embrace a theatrical life? Nothing can be more convenient for people of spirit, who have neither birth nor fortune; it is a fituation that holds the middle place between the nobility and citizens; an unrestricted condition, free of that decorum which is so troublesome to society. Our revenues are paid in ready cash by the public,

public, which is our bank; we live in continual mirth, and spend our money as we

get it.

The stage (added she) is particularly favourable to women: while I lived with Florimonda, (I blush at the rememberance of it) I was reduced to the necessity of liftening to the candle-fnuffers of the prince's company; not one man of fashion paid the least attention to my figure. What was the cause of this unimportance? I was not seen: the finest picture has not its effect, except in a particular light; but fince I have been placed on my proper pedestal, that is, on the stage, heavens! what a change has happened! I see at my heels the gayest youth of all these towns through which we pass. An actress therefore enjoys a great deal of pleafure in her occupation; if she is prudent; I mean, if the favours one gallant only at a time, the has all the honour imaginable paid to her; her chastity is applauded, and when she changes her lover, she is looked upon as a real widow who marries a fecond hufband; nay, if a widow takes a third, she is spoken of with contempt, and faid to have infringed the delicacy of her fex: whereas the actress seems to be more and more regarded, in proportion to the increase of her ad-After she has gone through an hundred intrigues, she is still a morfel for a lord!"

"To whom do you talk in this manner? (faid I, interrupting her) Do you think I am igno-

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ignorant of these advantages? I have often reflected on them, and they but too much flatter the imagination of fuch a girl as me: I even feel an inclination for the stage; but that alone is not fufficient; talent is absolutely necessary, and I have none: for when I fometimes attempted to repeat passages of plays before Arfenia, the always found fault with my performance; fo that I was dif-gusted at the profession." "Thou art easily discouraged (replied Phenicia;) Dost thou not know that those great actresses are commonly jealous? They are afraid (in spite of all their vanity) of being eclipsed. In short, I won't take Arfenia's word for thy incapacity; for the was certainly infincere: nay, I affure thee, without flattery, that thou art born for the stage; thou hast genius, a free and graceful carriage, a sweet voice, a good cheft, and withal a face! Ah, baggage, how many cavaliers wilt thou charm, if thou turnest actress!"

She plied me with more fuch seducing discourse, and made me pronounce some verses, that I myself might judge of my capacity for acting: but when she heard me, it was quite another case; she overwhelmed me with applause, and preferred me to all the actresses in Madrid. After this, I should have been inexcusable, had I doubted my own merit. Arsenia stood impeached and convicted of envy and insincerity; and I could not help allowing that I was an admirable subject. Two actors, who happen-

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ed to come in at that instant, and before whom Phenicia obliged me to repeat the verses which I had already recited to her, were seized with a kind of extasy; from which they no sooner recollected themselves, than they loaded me with praise. In good earnest, had the three wagered with one another which of them should applaud me most, they could not have employed more hyperbolical expressions. My modesty was not proof against such eulogiums: I began to believe myself of some value: and thus my thoughts were turned towards the stage.

"Come on then, my dear, (faid I to Phenicia) the affair is determined: I will follow thy advice, and enter in the company, provided they think well of it." My friend, transported with joy at these words, hugged me in her arms; and her two comrades seemed no less delighted to find me in these sentiments. We agreed, that next day I should repair to the theatre in the morning, and before the whole company affembled, shew the same sample of my talent that I had exhibited to them. If I had acquired the good opinion of those who were at Phenicia's lodgings, all the actors judged of me still more favourably when I had pronounced about twenty verses in their presence. They received me very winingly into their company; and then I was wholly engroffed by my first appearance, which, that I might render as gay as poffible, I employed upon it all the money that remained

remained from the fale of my ring; and tho' I had not enough to make a superb figure, lat least found means to supply the want of magnificence, by a genteel taste in my dress.

At length I appeared on the stage, for the first time; and then, what thundering ap. plause, what eulogiums was I favoured with? It is downright modesty, my friend, to say fimply that I ravished the audience; one must have been witness of the noise I made at Seville, to believe it. I became the difcourse of the whole city, which, during three weeks, came in crowds to the playhouse in fuch a manner, that the company, by this novelty, recalled the public, which had begun to desert them. I began then in a manner that charmed every body; and this was the fame thing as if I had advertised myself to be let to the highest bidder. Twenty cavaliers, of all ages, outvied one another in their proffers to me; and if I had followed my own inclination, I would have chosen him who was young and handsome; but people of our stamp ought to confult nothing but their interest and ambition, when a settlement is depending. For this reason. Don Ambrofio de Nifana, a man already old and ugly, but rich, generous, and one of the most powerful noblemen of Andalusia, had the preference. True, indeed, I made him purchase my favours at a good price; he hired for me a grand house, which he furnished in a very magnificent manner, gave me an expert cook, two lacquies, a chamber-

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chambermaid, and a thousand ducats for my monthly expence, over and above rich cloaths, and a pretty large quantity of jewels.

What a change was this in my fortune! My reason could not support it. I appeared to myself all of a sudden quite another perfon; and I am not furprifed that there are girls who forget in a little time the meanness and mifery from which they are rescued by the caprice of a man of quality. I will make a fincere confession; the applause of the public, the flattering discourse that I heard from all quarters, and the passion of Don Ambrosio, inspired me with sentiments of vanity that amounted to mere extravagance. I confidered my talent as a noble title. I affumed the airs of a woman of quality; and, becoming as covetous as I had before been prodigal of my fmiles, refolved to limit my prospect to Dukes, Counts, and Marquisses only.

Signior de Nisana came to sup at my house every evening with some of his friends; and I, on my side, took care to invite the most engaging of our actresses; so that we commonly spent the best part of the night in drinking and making merry. I accommodated myself mighty well to such an agreeable life, which, however, lasted but six months. Noblemen are apt to change, otherwise they would be too amiable. Don Ambrosio forsook me, for a conquest he had made of a young creature from Grenada, who had arrived at Seville with some charms, and the Vol. III.

talent of disposing them to the best advantage. My affliction at his inconstancy did not last, however, longer than four and twenty hours. I chose in his room a cava. lier of two and twenty, called Don Lewis d'Alcacer, to whom, in point of person, sew Spaniards could be compared. Thou wilt, doubtless, ask, and thou hast reason so to do, why I took fuch a young nobleman for my gallant, when I knew the confequences of fuch a choice? But, besides that Don Lew. is had neither father nor mother, and already enjoyed his estate, I must tell thee, that these consequences are not to be dreaded but by girls of a fervile condition, or unhappy the adventurers. Women of our profession are privileged persons, and not at all answerable for the effects that our charms produce. So much the worfe for those families whose heirs we pillage.

Alcacer and I attached ourselves so strongly to one another, that no mutual passion, believe, ever equalled that with which we were inflamed. We loved with so much sury, that one would have thought we were both enchanted: and those who were acquainted with our correspondence, believed us the most happy lovers in the world; though we were, in reality, the most miserable. If Don Lewis had a person altogether amiable, he was at the same time so jealous, that he afflicted me incessantly with unjust suspicions. It was in vain for me to accommodate myself to this weakness, to constrain myself so far as not to look

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ook upon a man. His distrust, ingenious in sinding out crimes to lay to my charge, rendered my caution altogether useless. Our most tender moments were always disturbed by quarrels, which it was impossible to endure. Both of us lost our patience, and we broke in a friendly manner. Would'st hou believe it? We looked upon the last day as the most charming of our commerce. Equally satigued with the troubles we had undergone, we expressed the utmost joy in our mutual adieu. We were like two miferable captives, who, after a rude slavery, at last recover their freedom.

Since that adventure, I am always on my guard against love. I will no more contract attachments that may disturb my repose. It does not become those of our profession to sigh like other people; and we ought not to entertain in private a passion, the ridicule of

which we represent in public.

About this time, I afforded fome employment to fame, which reported every where that I was an inimitable actress. On the assurance of this goddess, the players of Grenada wrote to me, proposing that I should enter into their company; and to let me know that the proposal was not to be rejected, sent me an account of their daily expence, and the terms of their offer: from which I concluded, that it would be for my interest to comply. I accepted it, therefore; though, at bottom, I was grieved at parting from Phenicia and Dorothea, whom I loved as much as one wo-

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man is capable of loving others of her fex. I left the first busy in melting the plate of a little merchant goldsmith, who, out of vanity, would have an actress for his mistress. I forgot to tell thee, that when I devoted myself to the stage, I changed, through whim, my name from Laura into that of Estella, under which appellation I set out for Grenada.

Here my first appearance was no less lucky than at Seville, and I faw myself at once furrounded by admirers: but being resolved to favour none except in an honourable way, I behaved to them with fo much referve, that they were blinded by my affected modesty. Nevertheless, that I might not be the dupe of a conduct that would be of no fervice, and which indeed was not natural to me, I was going to listen to a young judge of the citizen race, who assumes the nobleman by virtue of his office, a fumptuous table and rich equipage, when I faw, for the first time, the Marquis de Marialva. This Portuguese lord, who travels through Spain out of curiofity, stopped on his way at Grenada; and coming to the play one night, when I did not act, confidered with great attention the actreffes who prefented themfelves, and found one to his liking. He made an acquaintance with her the very next day, and was ready to conclude the bargain, when I appeared on the stage. My figure, and the airs I gave myfelf, turned the weathercock all of a fudden; and

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and my Portuguese attached himself to me only. To confess the truth, as I was not gnorant that my comrade had pleased that nobleman, I spared nothing to deprive her of her conquest; and I had the good fortune o accomplish it. I know that she bears me a grudge for my success, but I could not help doing it; and she ought to consider, it is a thing so natural to women, that the best friends make no scruple of practising it on one another.

CHAP. VIII.

The reception which Gil Blas met with from the players of Grenada, and his finding an old acquaintance behind the scenes.

L than an old actress, who lived in the neighbourhood, came to take her up in her way to the play-house. This venerable stage-heroine would have been very proper for playing the part of the goddess Cotys. My sister did not fail to present her brother to this superannuated sigure: upon which a great many compliments passed on both sides.

I left them together, telling the steward's widow, that I would rejoin her at the theatre as soon as I ordered my baggage to be carried to the Marquis of Marialva's house, to which he gave me a direction. I went immediately to my own room; from whence, after having satisfied my landlady, I repair-

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ed with a man who carried my portman. teau, to a large furnished house where my new master lodged. I met at the door his fleward, who asked me if I was not dame Estella's brother? and, upon answering in the affirmative, faid, "Signior cavalier, you are very welcome; the Marquis of Marialva, whose steward I have the honour to be, has ordered me to give you a hand. fome reception. There is a chamber prepared for you; to which, if you please, I shall shew you the way." So saying, he carried me to the top of the house, and shew. ed me into a chamber fo fmall, that a very narrow bed, a cheft, and two chairs, quite filled it. This was my apartment. won't be very much at large in this place, (faid my guide); but to make you amends, you shall be lodged in a superb manner at Lisbon." I locked my portmanteau in my cheft, put the key in my pocket, and asked at what hour they supped. I was answered, that the Portuguese nobleman kept no table at home, but gave a certain monthly fum to each domestic for his board. I put other questions to him, and learned, that the people belonging to the Marquis were a parcel of happy fluggards. After a fhort conversation, I left the steward, to go in quest of Laura, agreeably ingroffed with the prefage I had conceived of my new place.

As foon as I arrived at the play-house door, and told that I was Estella's brother, I was immediately admitted. You might have seen

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the guards as eager in making a passage for me, as if I had been one of the most considerable noblemen of Grenada. All the fervants and door-keepers whom I met made me profound bows. But what I wish I could paint to the reader, was my feri-comical reception behind the fcenes, where I found the company all dreffed, and ready to begin. The actors and actreffes to whom Laura presented me, poured upon me in shoals. The men overwhelmed me with embraces; and the women, in their turns, applying their painted faces to mine, covered it with white and red. Each defirous of being the first to make their compliment, they spoke all together. It was impossible for me alone to answer; but my fifter came to my affiftance, and her indefatigable tongue did not leave me in debt to any one.

The embraces of the actors and actreffes did not fuffice; for I was also obliged to undergo the civilities of the scene-painter, the music, prompter, candle-snuffer and his deputy; in short, of all the servants of the theatre, who, on the report of my arrival, came running to behold me. One would have thought that all thefe people were foundlings, who had never feen a brother before.

Mean while, the performance began; and fome gentlemen, who were behind the scenes, ran to their places; while I, like a child of the house, continued to converse with those of the actors who were not on the stage.

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Among these, I heard one called Melchior: I was struck with the name: I considered with attention the person who bore it, and imagined I had seen him somewhere. I at length recollected him to be Melchior Zapata, that poor stroller, who, as I have observed in the first volume of my history,

foaked crusts of bread in a spring.

Taking him aside accordingly, " I am mistaken (said I) if you are not that Signior Melchior, with whom I had the honour to breakfast one day, at the side of a clear fpring between Valladolid and Segovia. I was in company with a journeyman barber; we had fome provisions in a knapfack, which being joined to yours, made up a pretty little repast, which was seasoned with a thousand agreeable fallies." Zapata having mused some minutes, answered, "You mention a circumstance which I recal without disticulty. I was then returning to Zamora, from having made an unfuccessful attempt on the stage at Madrid. I remember too, that I was in very bad circumstances." " I remember the same thing (faid I) by this token, that you wore a jacket lined with play-bills. You see I have not forgot it, no more than that you complained at that time of having too chaste a wife." "O! I have no cause to complain of that at present, (faid Zapata, with precipitation,) egad! my gossip is very much reformed in that particular; and therefore my jacket is better lined than formerly."

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I was going to congratulate him on his wife's reformation, when he was obliged to leave me, in order to appear upon the stage. Curious to know his spouse, I made up to an actor, and defired he would fhew her to This he did; faying, "There she is; that is Narcissa, the handsomest of our ladies, your fifter excepted." I immediately concluded, that this actress must be she in favour of whom the Marquis de Marialva had declared himself, before he had seen Estella; and my conjecture was but too true. When the play was over, I conducted Laura to her lodging, where I -perceived feveral cooks preparing a great entertainment. "Thou mayest sup here, (said she)." " I won't indeed, (faid I,) the Marquis, perhaps, will chuse to be alone with you."-"O! not at all, (the replied,) he is to be here with two of his friends and one of our gentlemen; and it is in thy own option to make'a fixth. Thou knowest that, in the houses of actresses, secretaries have the privilege of eating with their masters." "True, (faid I,) but it would be a little too early for me to put myself on the footing of a favourite secretary. I must first enjoy his confidence, before I can merit that honourable privilege." So faying I left her, and repaired to my eating-house, which I intended to frequent every day, fince my master kept no table at home. I was or studied live man when the remember swant to make talditist

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CHAP. IX.

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He supped that evening with an extraordinary man: an account of what happened between them.

I Observed in the hall a kind of old monk, cloathed in coarse grey cloth, who was at supper all alone, in a corner. Sitting down, out of curiosity, just opposite to him, I saluted him very civilly, and he shewed himself no less polite. My pittance being brought, I began to dispatch it with a good deal of appetite; and while I ate in silence, I frequently looked at this person, whose eyes I always found fixed on mine. Fatigued with his stubborn perseverance in looking at me, I addressed him in these words: "Father, have we ever seen one another before? You observe me, as if I was not altogether unknown to you."

He answered with great gravity, "My reason for fixing my eyes upon you, is to admire the prodigious variety of adventures, which are marked in the features of your face." "I see, (said I, with an air of raillery,) that your reverence deals in metoposcopy." "I may boast of possessing that art, (replied the monk,) and of having made presages, which have been verified by the event. I am also skilled in chiromancy, and will venture to say, that my oracles are infallible, when I have compared the inspection of the hand with that of the face.

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Although this old man had all the appearance of a wife person, I thought him fo foolish that I could not help laughing in his face. Instead of being offended, he smiled at my impoliteness, and continued speaking in these words, after having cast his eyes around the hall, to be affured that nobody listened: "I am not surprised to see you so prejudiced against two sciences which are looked upon as frivolous in this age. long and painful study which they demand discourages all the learned men, who renounce and decry them, out of despair of acquiring them. For my own part, I am not discouraged by the obscurity in which they are shrouded, no more than by the difficulties which inceffantly occur in the fearch of chemical fecrets, and in the wonderful art of transmuting metals into gold.

But I don't confider (added he, recollecting himself) that I speak to a young cavalier, to whom my discourse must in effect appear quite chimerical. A fample of my skill will dispose you much better than all I can fay, to judge more favourably of my art." With these words, he took out of his pocket a phial full of red liquor; and then faid: " Here is an elixir which I composed this morning of the juice of certain plants distilled in an alembic; for I have employed almost all my life, like Democritus, in finding out the properties of minerals and fimples. You shall see its virtue put to the proof. The wine which we now drink to supper, though it is execrable, shall become

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become excellent." So faying, he put into my bottle two drops of his clixir, which rendered my wine more delicious than the

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The marvellous strikes the imagination; and when once that is gained, the judgment is no longer used. Charmed with such a fine fecret, and perfuaded that he must be more than the devil who could find it out, I cried, in a transport of admiration, "O! father, pray pardon me, if I took you at first for an old fool: I now do justice to your capacity, and need no more than I have seen to be affured that you could, if you pleafed, convert in an instant, a bar of iron into an ingot of gold. How happy should I be, could I posses such an admirable science." " Heaven preferve you from fuch an acquilition, (faid the old man, interrupting me with a profound figh.) You don't know, my fon, what a fatal fecret you wish for. Instead of envying, rather pity me, for having beflowed so much pains to make myself unhappy. I live in continual disquiet. I am afraid of being discovered, and that my labours will be rewarded by perpetual imprifonment. In this apprehension I lead a wandering life, disguised sometimes like a priest, or monk, and sometimes like a pea-fant, or cavalier. Is it then an advantage to know how to make gold at that price! And are not riches a real punishment for those persons who cannot enjoy them in tranquillity?" This

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This discourse seeming to me very sensible, I faid to the fage, "There is nothing like a quiet life: you give me a disgust at the philosopher's stone; and I will be contented with learning of you the future events of my life." " With all my heart, child, anfwered he, I have already made my remarks on your features : let us now fee your hand." I presented it to him with a confidence that will not do me much honour in the opinion of fome readers; and he having examined it with great attention, exclaimed, in a fit of enthusiasm, "Ah! what transitions from grief to joy, and from joy to grief! What capricious fuccessions of misfortune and prosperity! But you have already experienced a great deal of these vicissitudes. You have not a great many more afflictions to undergo; and a nobleman will confer upon you an agreeable destiny, not subject to change." After having affured me, that I might depend on this prediction, he bade me farewell, and went out of the eating-house, leaving me quite ingroffed with the things which I had heard. I did not at all doubt that the Marquis de Marialva was the nobleman in question; and, of consequence, nothing feemed more possible than the accomplishment of the oracle. But though I had not feen the least appearance of probability, I could not have helped reposing an intire belief in the pretended monk, so much authority had he acquired in my opinion by his elixir. On my side, that I might VOL. III. H haften

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hasten the happiness that was predicted to me, I resolved to attach myself to the Marquis more than I had done to any of my masters; and having formed this resolution, I retired to our house in a transport of joy that I cannot express. Never did a woman leave a fortune-teller with more satisfaction.

CHAP. X.

The commission that the Marquis de Marialva gave to Gil Blas, and the manner in which that faithful secretary acquitted himself of it.

THE Marquis was not yet come home from the lodgings of his actress; and I found his valets de chambre playing at primero in his apartment, expecting his re-I made up to them, and we amused ourselves in making merry till two o'clock in the morning, when our mafter arrived. He was a little furprised to see me, and said with a gracious air, which made me guess that he returned very well fatisfied with his evening's pleafure, " How, Gil Blas! not yet a bed?" I answered, that I was first willing to know what orders he had for me. " I shall, perhaps, (he resumed) give you a commission to-morrow morning; but it will be time enough then to tell you the particulars. Mean while, you may go to rest; and henceforth remember, that I dispense with your attendance in the evening, having occasion for no body but my valets de chambre."

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After this explanation, which at bottom gave me a good deal of pleasure, since it spared me a piece of subjection which I should have sometimes felt in a very disagreeable manner, I left the Marquis in his apartment, and retiring tomy garret, went to bed; but having no inclination to seep, it came into my head, that I should follow the advice which Pythagoras gives us, of recollecting at night all that we have done in the day, in order to applaud our good and condemn our bad actions.

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I did not find my conscience clear enough to be satisfied with my conduct; but reproached myself with having supported the imposture of Laura. In vain did I suggest as an excuse, that I could not in honour give the lie to a girl, who had nothing in view but to do me a pleasure; and that, in some shape, I sound myself under a necessity of being an accomplice in the cheat. Little satisfied with this apology, I answered, that I ought not then to have pushed things so far; and that I must have a great deal of impudence to live with a nobleman, whose considence I so ill repaid. In short, after a severe examination, I concluded, that if I was not a rogue I was next kin to it.

From thence passing to the consequences, I represented to myself, that I played a very high game in deceiving a man of quality, who, for my sins, would perhaps soon discover the trick. A reflection so judicious terrified me not a little; but the ideas of pleasure and interest soon dissipated my fear. Besides, the prophecy of the man with the elixir would have

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been fufficient to remove my doubts. I gave myself up, therefore, to the most agreeable fancies: I formed new rules of arithmetic. to reckon within myself the sum to which my wages would amount at the end of ten vears service. To this I added the gratifica. tions which I should receive from my mafter; and measuring them by his liberal disposition, or rather by my own desires, I had an intemperance of imagination, (if I may be allowed the expression) which set no bounds to my fortune. I was gradually lulled by fo much wealth, and fell afleep, in the very

act of building castles in Spain.

Next day, I got up at eight o'clock in the morning, to go and receive my patron's orders; but as I opened my door to go out, I was very much furprifed to fee him appear before me all alone, in his night cap and morning gown. " Gil Blas, (faid he) last night, when I left your fister, I promised to be with her this morning: but an affair of consequence hinders me from keeping my word. Go, and affure her from me, that I am very much mortified at the difappointment; and tell her, I shall certainly fup with her in the evening. This is not all, (added he, putting into my hand a purse with a little shagreen box enriched with diamonds,) carry this my picture to her, and keep this purfe of fifty pistoles, which I give as a mark of the friendship I have already conceived for you." I took the picture with one hand, and the purse I so lit-

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tle deserved with the other; running instantly to Laura, saying in the excess of joy with which I was transported, "Good! the prediction is visibly accomplishing. What happiness is it to be the brother of such a handsome and gallant girl? What a pity it is, that there is not as much honour as pro-

fit and pleasure in it?"

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Laura, contrary to the custom of people of her profession, being used to rise early, I furprised her at her toilet; where, in expectation of the Portugueze, the joined to her natural beauty all the auxiliary charms that the art of coquetry could bestow .-"Amiable Estella, (said I to her when I entered) the loadstone of strangers, I may now fit at table with my mafter, fince he has honoured me with a commission which gives me that prerogative, and of which I come to acquit myself. He cannot have the pleafure of your company this morning, as he proposed; but, for your consolation, will fup with you at night: and he fends you his picture, which to me feems a matter of ftill greater confolation."

I accordingly gave her the box, which, by the bright sparkling of the diamonds that adorned it, infinitely rejoiced her eye fight. She of ened it, and shutting it again, after having considered the painting superficially, returned to the stones, whose beauty she extolled, saying with a smile, "These are copies which we women of the stage value

more than originals."

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I then told her, that the generous Portu. gueze, when he entrusted me with the picture, had gratified me with a purse of fifty piitoles. "I congratulate thee upon thy good fortune, (said she to me) this nobleman begins where others even rarely end." "To you, my dear creature, (I replied) I owe this present: the Marquis bestowed it upon me folely on account of my being your brother." " I wish (said she) that he would give you as much every day: for I cannot express how dear thou art to me. The very first moment I saw thee, I attached my, felf to thee by a tie too strong for time to break. When I loft thee at Madrid, I did not despair of finding thee again; and yesterday, when I saw thee, received thee as a man whom fate brought back to my arms. In a word, my friend, heaven has destined us for one another; thou shalt be my husband; but we must first enrich ourselves. I want to have two or three more intrigues to make thee easy for life."

I thanked her in a polite manner for the trouble she intended to take on my account; and we insensibly engaged in a conversation that lasted till noon. Then I retired, to give an account to my master of the manner in which his present was received: and though Laura had given me no instructions on that subject, I did not fail to compose by the way a fine compliment, which I intended to repeat in her name. But when I went home, I was told that the Marquis had gone out;

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and it was decreed that I should see him no more; as may be perceived in reading the following chapter.

CHAP. XI.

Gil Blas receives a piece of news which is like a thunderbolt to him.

Repaired to my eating-house, where meeting two men of a very agreeable conversation, I dined and sat table with them, till it was time to go to the play. Then we parted: they went about their own affairs, and I took the road to the theatre. I must observe by the bye, that I had all the reason in the world to be in good humour; mirth had reigned in my conversation with these two gentlemen; my fortune had a most smiling face; and, notwithstanding my spirits sunk, without my knowing the reason, and without my being able to keep them up. It was, doubtless, a presage of the missortune with which I was threatened.

As I entered the green-room, Melchior Zapata came to me, and telling me foftly to follow him, carried me into a private place, and addressed me in this manner: "Signior cavalier, I think it my duty to give you a very important piece of intelligence. You know that the Marquis de Marialva had, at first, a passion for Narcissa, my wise; and already appointed a day to come and take a slice of my rib, when the artful Estella found means to break the bargain, and allure

lure the Portugueze nobleman to her own charms. You may well believe, that an actress does not lose such a good prey without vexation. My spouse has this affair at heart, and is capable of undertaking any thing to be revenged: she has now a fair occasion. Yesterday, if you remember, all our servants crowded to see you: when the under candle-snuffer told some of the company, that he knew you very well, and that you was nothing less than Estella's brother.

This report (added Melchior) reached the ears of Narcissa, who did not fail to interrogate the author, and he has confirmed his affertion, by telling her, that he knew you Arlenia's valet, at the fame time that Estella, under the name of Laura, served that actress at Madrid. My wife, charmed with that discovery, will impart it to the Marquis de Marialva, who is to be at the play this evening: Take your measures accordingly; if you are not actually Estella's brother, I advise you as a friend, and on account of our old acquaintance, to provide for your fafety. Narciffa, who demands but one victim, has allowed me to give you this notice, that you may prevent any finister accident by immediate flight."

It would have been supersuous in him to say more of the matter. I thanked the stage-player for his information, and he easily perceived, by my terrified look, that I was not the man to give the candle-snuffer

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the lie. I did not feel the least inclination to depend upon my effrontery: I was not even tempted to bid Laura farewell, lest she should have insisted upon my facing it out. I could very well conceive, that she was an actress of fuch skill, as to be able to extricate herself out of the dilemma; but I faw nothing except an infallible chastifement for me, and I was not fo much in love as to brave it. My fole fludy being, therefore, to escape with my houshold goods, I mean my baggage, I disappeared from the play-house in a twinkling, and, with the utmost dispatch, caused my portmanteau to be transported to the house of a carrier, who was to fet out for Toledo, at three o'clock next morning. I could have wished to be with the Count de Polan, whose house seemed my only asylum: but I was not yet there, and I could not, without the utmost uneasiness, think on the time I had to stay in a city, where I was afraid they would fearch for me, even in the night.

I did not, for all that, omit going to fupper, at my eating-house, although I was as much disturbed as a debtor, who knows that there are bailiss at his heels. What I ate that evening did not, I believe, produce excellent chyle in my stomach. Being the miserable sport of fear, I examined every body that came into the hall; and when, unluckily, any ill looking fellow entered, (a common case in these places,) I shivered with dread. Having supped, in the midst of continual alarms, I rose from table,

table, and returned to the carrier's house, where I threw myself on a trus of fresh straw, and lay till the hour of our departure.

Mean while, my patience was fufficiently exercifed. I was attacked with a thousand disagreeable reflections. When I chanced to slumber, I beheld the furious Marquis mangling the fair face of Laura with blows, and demolishing every thing in her house; or heard him order his fervants to make me perith under the bastinado. Then start. ing, I awoke; and though to wake is ufually a great comfort after fuch a terrible dream, waking was to me more dreadful than the dream itself. Happily for me, the carrier delivered me from my affliction, by giving me notice that his mules were ready. I was immediately a-foot, and, thank heaven! fet out radically cured of chiromancy and Laura. In proportion as we moved from Grenada, my mind refumed its tranquillity; and I began to enter into conversation with the carrier. I laughed at some pleasant stories he recounted, and loft, infenfibly, all my fear. I enjoyed a found fleep at Ubeda, where we lay the first night, and on the fourth arrived at Toledo.

My first care was to ask a direction for the Count de Polan's house, whither I repaired, very well persuaded that he would not suffer me to lodge in any other place: but I reckoned without my host; for I found nobody at home

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home but the housekeeper, who told me that his master had set out in the evening for the castle of Leyva, having received a message that Seraphina was dangerously ill.

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I did not expect the absence of the Count, which diminished the joy I selt in being at Toledo, and induced me to take another resolution. Finding myself so near Madrid, I resolved to go thither; reslecting that I might push myself at court, where a superior genius, as I had heard, was not absolutely necessary to make a fortune. The very next day, I took the advantage of a return-horse for that capital of Spain; and fortune conducted me thither, in order to make me act higher parts than those which I had hitherto performed.

CHAP XII.

Gil Blas takes lodgings in a house where he contracts an acquaintance with Captain Chinchilla. The character of that officer; with an account of the affair that brought him to Madrid.

N my first arrival at Madrid, I fixed my habitation in a house that was let into lodgings, where lived, among other people, an old captain, who had come from the farther end of New Castile, to solicit at court for a pension, which he thought he had but too well deserved. His name was Don Hannibal de Chinchilla. It was not without astonishment that I beheld him for the first time, being a man turned of sixty, of a gigantic stature.

flature, and extremely meagre. He wore a pair of thick whifkers, that curled up to his temples on each fide. Over and above his want of a leg and arm, a large plaister of green filk supplied the place of one eye; and the scars of many wounds appeared on his face. These things excepted, he was pretty much like another man. Besides, he had a good deal of understanding, and still more gravity; was scrupulous in his morals, and, in particular, piqued himself on his delicacy in point of honour.

After having conversed with him two or three times, he honoured me with his confidence. I soon became acquainted with all his affairs. He recounted to me on what occasion he had left an eye at Naples, an arm in Lombardy, and a leg in the Low Countries. What I admired in his narration of battles and sieges was, that not one gasconade escaped him, nor even a word in his own praise; though I could have willingly pardoned him for boasting of the half of himself that remained, as an indem-

But he told me, the thing that gave him the most concern was, that he had spent a considerable estate in his campaigns; so that now his whole fortune was reduced to about an hundred ducats a year, which was scarce sufficient to maintain his whiskers, clear his

nification for the other half he had loft.

Those officers who return from the wars safe

and found are feldom fo modest.

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lodging, and pay for the writing his memorials, "For in short, Signior Cavalier, (added he, shrugging up his shoulders,) I present one, thank God, every day, without being favoured with the least notice. One would say, that there is a wager between the prime minister and me, which of us shall sirst fail, I in giving, or he in receiving them. I have also had the honour to present several to his majesty; but the curate sings no better than his clerk; and, in the meantime, my castle of Chinchilla sinks into ruins for

want of reparation."

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We must despair of nothing, (said I to the captain) you are now perhaps on the eve of feeing all your toils and troubles reraid with interest." " I ought not to flatter myself with that hope, (replied Don Hannibal;) three days are not yet elapsed fince I spoke to one of the minister's secretaries; and, if I may believe what he faid, I may make myself very easy." " And pray, what did he fay? (I replied,) did he pretend that you was not worthy of a recompence?" " You shall judge, (resumed Chinchilla.) The fecretary told me very plainly, " Master What-d'ye-call'um, don't brag so much of your zeal and fidelity. You have done no more than your duty, in exposing yourself to danger in behalf of your country. The glory alone which attende brave actions is a sufficient recompence, and ought to fatisfy a Spaniard in particular. You must undeceive yourself, Vol. III. therefore,

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therefore, if you look on the gratification you folicit, as a debt due to your valour. Provided it be granted to you, you will owe it entirely to the favour and generofity of the king, who is pleafed to think himfelf indebted to those of his subjects who have distinguished themselves in the service of the state. You see, by this, (pursued the captain,) that I am still in its debt; and that, in all likelihood, I shall return as rich as I came."

One naturally interests himself for a brave man in adverfity. I encouraged him to perfevere, and offered to write his memorials gratis. I went even fo far as to offer him my purse, and to conjure him to take out of it what money he wanted. But he was none of those who never wait for a second invitation on these occasions. On the contrary, he shewed himself very delicate on this point, and thanked me, in a lofty manner, for my good will. He afterwards told me, that rather than be a burden to any body, he had accustomed himself, by degrees, to live fo frugally, that the least nourishment was fufficient for his fubfiftence. This was but too true. His whole food confifted of leeks and onions; and, therefore, he was nothing but skin and bone. That he might have no witness of his wretched repast, he used to lock himself up in his chamber at meals. I obtained of him, however, by dint of intreaty, that we should dine and sup together; and deceiving his pride by an ingenious compassion, ordered more victuals and

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and liquor than I had occasion for, to be brought, and urged him to eat and drink. At first he stood upon ceremony, but at length he yielded to my intreaties. After which, becoming infensibly more bold, he, of himself, assisted me in clearing my plate,

and emptying my bottle.

When he had drank four or five draughts, and reconciled his stomach to good nourishment, " Truly, (faid he, with an air of gaiety,) you are very bewitching, Signior Gil Blas, you make me do what you please; your behaviour divests me of all fear of abusing your beneficent disposition." My captain, at that time, feemed fo well rid of shane, that if I had laid hold of the opportunity of pressing him again to accept my purse, I believe he would not have refused it. But I did not put him to the trial; contenting myself with having made him my mess-mate, and with taking the trouble not only of writing his memorials, but also of helping him to compose them. By means of having copied homilies, I had learned to turn a period, and was become a kind of author. The old officer, on his part, piqued himself on his knowledge in composition; so that, exerting ourselves together, through emulation, we produced morfels of eloquence, worthy of the most celebrated masters of Salamanca. But in vain did each of us exhaust his genius, in fowing flowers of rhetoric in those memorials; it was no better, as the faying is, than fowing them on fand. Whatever

Whatever expedient we fell upon to enhance the fervices of Don Hannibal, the court paid no regard to it. A circumstance that did not at all engage the old invalid to make the eulogium of those officers who ruin themselves in the field. In his bad humour, he cursed his fate, and wished Naples, Lombardy, and

the Low Countries, at the devil.

To complete his mortification, it happened one day, that, under his very nofe, a poet, introduced by the Duke d'Alva, having rehearfed, in the prefence, an ode on the birth of an Infanta, was gratified with a penfion of five hundred ducats. I believe the maimed captain would have run mad on this occasion, had I not been at great pains to recompose him. "What is the matter, (faid I, feeing him quite befide himfelf,) there is nothing in this that ought to give you uneafinefs. Has it not been the privilege of poets, time immemorial, to make princes pay tribute to the muse? There is not a crowned head in the world that does not gratify one of those gentlemen with a pension: and, between you and me, these forts of rewards being generally transmitted to the knowledge of posterity, immortalize the liberality of kings; whereas the other recompences which they bestow, are often but so much loss to their reputation. How many rewards did Augustus dispense? How many penfions did he grant, of which we have not the least intimation? But the anost remote posterity will always know, as we do,

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Notwithstanding all I could say to Don Hannibal, the fruits of the ode stuck in his ftomach like lead; and as he could not digest it, he resolved to abandon the whole of his pursuit But first, being willing, as his last effort, to present one other memorial to the Duke of Lerma, we went together to the house of that prime minister, where we met a young man, who having faluted the captain, faid to him, with an affectionate air, " My dear old master is it you? What affair has brought you hither? If you have occasion for a person of interest with his Highness, pray command me; I offer you my good offices." How, Pedrillo, (replied the captain), to hear you talk, one would imagine you enjoy some important post in this family." "I have, at least, (answered the young man), power enough to be of fervice to an honest country gentleman like you." " If that be the case, (said the officer, with a fmile), I have recourse to your protection." " 'Tis granted, (refumed Pedrillo), let me know what is the business, and I premise you shall get some snips out of the minister."

We had no sooner communicated the affair to this benevolent young fellow, than he asked where Don Hannibal lodged; in which being satisfied, he assured us, that we should hear of him next day; and then disappeared, without giving us the least hint

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of what he intended to do, or even telling us whether or no he belonged to the Duke of Lerma. I was curious to know who this Pedrillo was, that feeemed fo fprightly. " He is a young fellow (faid the captain), who ferved me fome years ago, and who feeing me in want, left me to go in quest of a better place. I don't blame him for that: it is very natural for one to change for the He is a wag who does not want understanding, and is as intriguing as the devil: but in fpite of all his art, I don't depend a great deal upon the zeal which he has expressed in my behalf." "Who knows, (faid I), but he may be of some use? If he belongs, for example, to some one of the Duke's principal officers he may have it in his power to do you fervice. You are not ignorant that every thing is carried, among the great, by cabal and intrigue; that they have favourite domestics who lead them by the nofe; and that these again, in their turn are governed by their own valets."

Next morning, Pedrillo coming to our lodgings, "Gentlemen, (faid he), if I did not explain myfelf yesterday, on the means I have of serving Captain Chinchilla, it was because we were not in a place proper for such an explanation. Besides, I was willing to sound the business, before I disclosed it to you. You must know then, that I am the lacquey and consident of Signior Rodrigo de Calderona, the Duke of Lerma's first secretary. My master, who is very much addisted to gallan-

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try, sups every evening with an Arragonian nightingale, that he keeps encaged near the court. She is a very handsome girl, from Albarazin, of good understanding, and sings to admiration; therefore she is called Signiora Sirena. As I carry a billet doux to her every morning, I have just now seen her; I have proposed that she shall make Don Hannibal pass for her uncle, and, on that supposition, engage her gallant to protect him. She is willing to undertake the affair; for, besides the small advantage she foresees in it for herself, she will be extremely glad to be thought the niece of a brave gentleman."

Signor de Chinchilla made wry faces at this propofal, and expressed a reluctance in making himself an accomplice of such a prank; and still more, in suffering a she-adventurer to dishonour his family, by faying she belonged to it. He was difgusted at it, not only on account of himfelf, but also perceived in it (if I may be allowed the expression) a retro-active ignominy upon all his ancestors. This delicacy feemed very unfeafonable to Pedrillo, who, being shocked at it, exclaimed, "You jest, sure, to take it in that view! You are fuch a fet of people, you cottage 'fquires, your vanity is quite ridiculous. Signior Cavalier, (he purfued, addrefling himself to me,) are you not furprised at the scruples he makes? Egad! it is a fine thing indeed to stand on such punctilios at court? Fortune is never neglected there, whatever shape it assumes."

I approved of what Pedrillo faid, and we harangued the captain fo fuccessfully, that we prevailed upon him, in spite of himself, to become Sirena's uncle. When we had gained this victory over his pride, we laid all our three heads together, in order to compose a new memorial for the minister, and it was revised, augmented, and corrected accordingly. I then wrote it out fair, and Pedrillo carried it to the Arragonian lady, who, that very evening, put it into the hands of Signior Don Rodrigo, to whom she spoke in fuch a manner, that the fecretary believing her really the captain's niece, promised to exert himself in his behalf. A few days after we saw the effect of this our work. Pedrillo came to our lodging with an air of triumph. "Good news, (faid he to Chinchilla) the king is going to make a distribution of governments, benefices, and penfions, in which you shall not be forgot. But I am ordered to ask what present you intend to make to Sirena. As for my own part, I declare I'll have nothing at all. I prefer the pleasure of having contributed towards bettering my old master's fortune, to all the gold in the world. But this is not the case with our nymph of Albarazin. She is a little Jewishly inclined, when the business is to oblige her neighbour: she would take money of her own father; so you may judge if the will refuse it from a pretended uncle."

"Let her mention her demand, (replied Don Hannibal,) she shall, if she pleases, have

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yearly one third of the pension I obtain; and that ought to fatisfy her, if the whole revenues of his Catholic Majesty were concerned in the bargain." " For my own part, (replied Don Rodrigo's Mercury,) I would chearfully rely upon your word, because I know the value of it; but you have to do with a little creature, who is naturally distrufful. Besides, she would much rather have, once for all, two thirds of the product advanced in ready money." "Where the devil does she think I shall find it, (cried the officer, hastily interrupting him,) does she think I am a money broker? It seems you have not made her acquainted with my fituation." " Pardon me, (replied Pedrillo,) fhe knows very well that you are as poor as Job: after what I told her, she cannot be ignorant of your circumstances. But don't give yourself any trouble about the matter; I am a man fertile in expedients. I know an old rogue of a lawyer, who takes pleafure in lending money at ten per cent. You shall make an affignment, with security to him, before a notary, of the first year of your. pension, for the like sum which you shall acknowledge to have received from him, and which you will touch in effect, the interest With regard to the fecurity, the lender will be contented with your castle of Chinchilla, fuch as it is; fo that we shall have no dispute upon that score."

The captain protested that he would accept of the conditions, if he should be lucky

enough

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enough to have any share in the favours which were to be distributed next day. And he was not disappointed; being gratisted with a pension of three hundred pistoles on a certain government. As soon as he understood this piece of news, he gave all the security that was demanded, transacted his little affairs, and returned to new Castile, with some pistoles in his pocket.

CHAP. XIII.

Gil Blas meets his dear friend Fabricius at court; their mutual joy; they repair together to a certain place, where a curious conversation happens between them.

I Contracted a custom of going every morning to court, where I commonly spent two or three hours, in seeing the grandees pass and repass, though they appeared there without that splendor which surrounds

them in other places.

One day as I walked to and fro, and strutted through the apartments, making, like many others, a foolish figure enough, I perceived Fabricius, whom I had left at Valladolid, in the service of an hospital director. What assonished me was, that he talked familiarly to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and the Marquis of Santa-Cruz. Nay, these two noblemen seemed to listen to him with pleasure, and he was as well dressed as a man of quality. Am I not mistaken? said I to myself. Can this be the

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fon of barber Nunez? Perhaps it is some young courtier, who refembles him? I did not long remain in doubt: the noblemen went away, and I accosted Fabricius. knew me at first fight; and after having made me squeeze through the croud with him, to get out of the apartments, " My dear Gil Blas, (faid he, embracing me,) I am rejoiced to see you again. How art thou employed at Madrid? art thou still in service? or hast thou some post at court? Give me an account of all that has happened to thee fince thy precipitate retreat from Valladolid." " You ask me a great many questions at once, (said I,) and we are not now in a proper place to relate adventures." "Thou art in the right, (he replied,) we shall be more at liberty in my lodgings. Come, I will shew you the way; it is not far from hence. I am quite my own master, agreeably lodged, perfectly easy in my circumstances. I am contented with my situation, and happy because I think myself so."

I accepted the proposal, and sollowed Fabricius, who stopped before a very sine house, where he told me he lodged. We crossed a court, where, on one side, there was a great stair-case that led to very superb apartments, and on the other a small slight, equally dark and narrow, by which we ascended to the lodging he had so much extolled. It consisted of one room only, which my ingenious friend had divided into sour, by thin deal boards. The sirst served as an antichamber

to the fecond, where he lay; he had made a closet of the third, and a kitchen of the last. The chamber and antichamber were lined with maps, and these of philosophy: and the furniture was fuitable to this kind of hanging; confisting of a large brocade bed, very much worn; old chairs covered with yellow ferge, garnished with a fringe of Grenada filk of the fame colour; a table with gilt feet, covered with leather that feemed to be once red, and bordered with a tinfel fringe, become black by the lapfe of time; with an ebony cup-board, adorned with figures coarfely carved. He had, instead of a bureau, in his closet, a little table; and his library was composed of some books, with feveral bundles of paper lying on shelves, placed above one another, along the wall. His kitchen, which was conformable to the rest, contained some earthen ware, and other necessary utenfils.

Fabricius, after having given me time to consider his apartment, said, "What dost thou think of my lodging and œconomy? an't thou enchanted with them?" "Yes, saith, (I replied, smiling,) I am so. Thou must have certainly played thy cards well at Madrid, to be so well furnished. Thou, doubtless, enjoyest some post." "Heaven forbid! (replied he,) the business I follow is above all employments whatever. A man of sashion, to whom this house belongs, gave me a room, which I have divided into four, and furnished, as thou seest. I

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meddle with nothing but what gives me pleasure, and feel not the cravings of necessity." "Pray be more explicit, (said I, interrupting him,) you irritate the desire I have of knowing what you do." "Well, (said he) thou shalt be satisfied. I am turned author, and have commenced wit: I write in verse as well as in prose, and am

equally good at every thing."

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"Thou a favourite of Apollo! (cried I, laughing.) This is what I never could have divined. I should have been much less furprised to have found thee in a quite contrary fituation. What charms couldft thou find in the condition of a poet? Methinks these people are commonly despised in civil life, and are far from having an established ordinary." "O fie! (cried he in his turn) thou talkest of those miserable authors, whose works are the refuse of libraries and players. Is it to be wondered at that fuch writers are not effeemed? But good authors, my friend, are on a better footing in the world; and I may fay, without vanity, that I am one of that number." "I don't at all doubt it. (faid I,) thou art a young fellow of excellent genius. That which is composed by thee cannot be bad. All that I am at a loss to know is, how thou wast first seized with the rage of rhime."

"Thy furprise is just, (replied Nunnez;) I was so well fatisfied with my situation while in the service of Don Manual Ordonnez, that I did not so much as wish for any other. But

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my genius rifing by degrees, like that of Plautus, above servitude, I composed a co. medy, which was acted by the company who performed at Valladolid. Although it was not worth a fig, it met with great fuccess; from whence I concluded that the public was a good milch cow, which easily parted with its store. This reflection, joined to the furious defire of composing new pieces, detached me from the hospital. The love of poetry banished my passion for riches; and resolving to repair to Madrid, as the center of wit, in order to form my taste, I demanded my dismission from the director, who did not grant it without regret, fo much affection had he conceived for me." "Fabricius, (said he,) hast thou any cause to be diffatisfied?" "No, Sir; (I replied,) you are the best of masters; and I am penetrated with your generofity. But you know, one must follow his deftiny. I find I am born to eternize my name by works of genius." " What folly possesses thee! (refumed the good citizen) thou hast already taken root in the hospital, and art of that kind of wood of which flewards and even directors are made. going to leave what is folid, in order to employ thyself in trifles; and thou wilt foon repent of thy imprudence, my child."

The director feeing that he opposed my design to no purpose, paid my wages, and over and above, made me a present of sifty ducats, as a recompence for my faithful services: so that with this, and what I found means to

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glean in the little commissions that were intrusted to my integrity, I was in a condition, on my arrival at Madrid, to appear in a very handsome manner. This I failed not to do; though the writers of our nation don't much pique themselves on their neat appearance. I foon became acquainted with Lope de Vegat, Miguel Cervantes de Saavedra*, and other famous authors; but in preference to these great men, I chose for my preceptor a young batchelor of Cordova, the incomparable Don Lewis de Gongora, the finest genius that ever Spain produced. He will not allow his works to be printed in his life time, but contents himself with reading them to his friends; and, what is very remarkable, nature has endued him with the rare talent of fucceeding in all kinds of poetry. He chiefly excels in fatire, which is indeed his main strength. He is not (like Lucilius) a muddy river that fweeps along with it abundance of flime; but rather the Tagus, that rolls over golden fands its limpid stream." Thou drawest (faid I to Fabricius) an agreeable picture of this same batchelor; and I don't doubt that a person of fuch merit has a great number of envious enemies." " All our authors, (he replied) K 2

[†] Lope Felix de Vega Carpio, a renowned diamatic poet, as much admired by the Spaniards as Shakespeare (with whom he was coten porary) is by the English. He composed eighteen hundred pieces for the stage, in verse, besides many other works that proclaim the fruitfulness of his genius.

^{*} Miguel Cervantes de Saavedra, the celebrated author of Dan Quixote.

good as well as bad, inveigh bitterly against him. He delights, says one, in bombass, points, metaphors, and transposition. His verses, saith another, are as obscure as those which the Salian priests sang in their processions, and which nobody understood. Others again found sault with his composing sometimes sometimes or romances, sometimes comedies, stanzas, and acrostics; as if he had soolishly undertaken to eclipse all the great masters in their own different ways. But all these efforts of jealousy are bassled by a muse that is cherished by all ranks of people, from

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" It was under this skilful master that I ferved my apprenticeship, and I dare fay, it has appeared: for I have so happily imbibed his genius, that I have already composed fome detached pieces which he would not blush to father. I opened my ware, (according to his example) in the houses of the great, where I am wonderfully well received, and have to do with people who are not difficult to please. 'Tis true, indeed, my fuccessful beginning has been of no differvice to my later compositions. In short, I am beloved by feveral noblemen, and, in particular, live with the Duke de Medina Sidonia, as Horace once lived with Mace-You fee (added Fabricius) in what manner I was metamorphofed into an author. I have nothing elfe to relate; so that it is now thy turn, Gil Blas, to rehearfe thy exploits."

I opened accordingly, and suppressing every trivial circumstance, gave him the detail he defired: after which, it being dinner time, he took out of his ebony cupboard, a couple of napkins, some bread, the remains of a shoulder of roast mutton, a bottle of excellent wine, and we fat down to table with all the gaity of two friends who met after a long separation. "Thou seest (said he) my free and independent life: I might, if I would, go and dine every day with the people of quality; but besides that the poetic inclination keeps me oftentimes at home, I am a fort of an Aristippus; and can equally accommodate myself to company and folitude, to affluence and frugality." We liked the wine fo well, that there was a necessity of taking another bottle from the flore; and towards the end of the repast, I expressed a desire of seeing some of his productions. He immediately fearched among his papers for a fonnet, which he read aloud with great emphasis. Nevertheless, in spite of the charms of his reading, I found the performance so obscure, that I could not comprehend the meaning of one fyllable. Perceiving my ignorance, "This sonnet (said he) does not seem very clear to thy apprehension; is it not so?" I owned to him that I could have wished it had been more plain. Upon which he fell alaughing at my expence. "If this fonnet (he refumed) is not intelligible, so much the better. The Natural and Simple won't do for fonnets, odes, and other works K 3 that

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that require the fublime. The fole merit of these, is in their obscurity; and it is fufficient if the poet himself thinks he un. derstands them." "You joke, friend, (faid I, interrupting him,) good fense and perspicuity ought to be ingredients in poetry of all kinds whatever; and if thy in. comparable Gongora writes not more plain. ly than thou dost, I confess my opinion of him finks apace. He must be a poet who can never deceive any other age than his own. Let us now have a specimen of thy profe." Hereupon, Nunnez produced a preface, which (he faid) he intended to prefix to a collection of comedies that he had then in the press; and having read it, asked my opinion. " I am (faid I) no better pleased with thy prose than with thy poetry. Thy fonnet is a piece of verbole fuflian; and thy preface is composed of farfetched expressions, words that have not the public ftamp, perplexed phrases; in a word, thy stile is quite peculiar to thyself; and the books of our best authors, antient as well as modern, are written in a quite different manner." " Poor ignoramus! (cried Fabricius) thou dost not know then, that every profaic writer who now aspires at the reputation of a delicate pen, affects that fingularity of stile, and those odd expressions which shock thee so much. There are of us, five or fix bold innovators who have undertaken to make a thorough change in the language; and we will accomplish it (please God) in spite of Lope de Vega, Cervantes, and all the fine geniuses

geniuses who cavil at our new modes of speech. We are seconded by a number of partizans of distinction, and have even some

theologicians in our cabal.

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" After all, (added he) our defign is commendable; and, prejudice apart, we are more valuable than those natural writers. who fpeak like the common run of mankind. I don't know for what reason they are esteemed by so many persons of honour. Their manner was proper enough at Athens or Rome, where there was no distinction in point of speaking; so that Socrates said to Alcibiades, the people was an excellent school-master: but at Madrid, we have both a good and bad language, and our courtiers express themselves quite otherwise than our citizens, believe me. In short, our new style overtops that of our antagonists. I will, by one example, make thee perceive the difference between the gentility of our diction, and the flatness of theirs. They would fay, quite plainly, (for inftance) " Interludes embelish a comedy." While we, with more spirit, would pronounce-": Interludes create beauty in a comedy." Take notice of that, " create beauty." Dost thou perceive all the brilliancy, all the delicacy, all the prettiness of the expression?"

l interrupted my innovator with a loud laugh. "Go, Fabricius, (faid I) thou art quite an original with this thy precious language." "And thou (answered he) art no better than a beast, with thy natural stile.

Go, (faid he, repeating the words of the archbishop of Grenada) go and tell my treasfurer, to give you an hundred ducats; and heaven direct you with that sum. Adieu, Mr Gil Blas, I wish you a great deal of good

fortune, with a little more tafte.'

I redoubled my mirth at this fally, and Fabricius forgiving me for having spoken so irreverently of his writings, lost nothing of his good humour. We finished our second bottle, and getting up from table in a pretty good trim, went ont with a design to walk in the Prado; but passing by the door of a tavern, we took it in our heads to go in.

This place was usually frequented by good company: and I observed in two separate halls a great many cavaliers amusing themselves in different diversions. In one, they played at draughts and primero; and in the other, ten or twelve persons were listening very attentively to a dispute between two professed wits. We had no occasion to go near them, in order to learn that a metaphysical proposition was the subject of their dispute; for they talked with such warmth and transport, that they looked like people possessed. I imagine, if Eleazar's * ring had been put under their noses, we should

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^{*} Eleazar, a famous magician, who cast out devils, by tying to the nose of the possessed a certain mystical ring, which the dæmon no sooner smelled, than he overturned and abandoned the patient. He performed before the emperor Vespasian, and in order to show the power he had over the devil, commanded him to overset a pitcher of water. This the dæmon immediately complied with, to the association of all present.

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have feen devils issue with their breath. Good God, (faid I to my companion,) what paffion! what lungs! These disputants were certainly born to be public criers. The greatest part of mankind are misplaced." "Yes, truly; (he replied) these people seem to be of the race of Novius*, that Roman banker, whose voice exceeded the noise of carmen. But, (added he) what gives me the greatest disgust at their discourse, is, that our ears are stunned to no purpose." We removed at a distance from those vociferous metaphyficians, and by that expedient, I prevented a violent head-ach which had begun to feize. We went and fat down in the corner of the other hall, whence, while we drank refreshing liquors, we examined the cavaliers as they came in and went out, as Nunnez knew almost all of them. "Egad! (cried he) the dispute of our philosophers won't be soon over: here are fresh reinforcements arriving: these three men will engage in the fray. But feeft thou these two originals going out? That little, fwarthy, withered creature, whose lank strait hair falls down in equal portions before and behind, is called Don Julien de Vellanunno; and is a young judge

^{*} Novius, whom M. Le Sage honours with the title of Banker, was no other than a rank usurer, who, from being a slave, came to be a rich citizen of Rome. Horace, who has perpetuated this infamy, has also immortalized the loudness of his voice, in the first fatire of his first book.

⁻at hic si plaustra ducenta Concurrantque foro tria funera magno sonabit Cornua quod, vineatque tubas-

who affects the beau : one of my friends and I going to dine with him t'other day, furprised him in a pretty fingular occupation. He was diverting himself in his closet, by throwing away the writings of a process of which he is to make a report, and make a grey-hound bring them back again to him; while the dog tore them to pieces very handsomely. The name of that licentiate with the copper nofe, who accompanies him, is Don Cherubin Tonto, a canon of the church of Toledo, the weakest mortal in the world: though, by his fprightly fmiling air, you would imagine he had a great-deal of wit. He has bright sparkling eyes, with an arch malicious fneer; fo that one would be apt to think him a wag. When he hears a delicate performance read, he liftens with fuch attention as feems full of understanding, and all the while comprehends nothing at all of the matter. He dined with us at the judge's house, where an infinite number of witty things were faid: but he spoke never a word, though he applauded them with grimaces and gestures that seem. ed even superior to the fallies that we uttered."

"Dost thou know (faid I to Nunnez) these two shabby fellows, who, with their elbows on the table, sit in the corner, and converse together in whispers?" "No, (said he) their faces are quite unknown to me; but, in all likelihood, they are coffeehouse politicians, who censure the government. Mind that gen-

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teel cavalier who whistles as he walks thro' the hall, and supports himself sometimes on one foot, sometimes on another: that is Don Augustin Moreto, a young poet who was born with some genius, but flatterers and ignorant people have almost turned his brain. The man whom he accosts is one of his confederates, who is also moon-struck,

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More authors still! (cried he, shewing me two well dreffed men coming in,) one would think they had made a rendezvous here, to pass in review before thee. These are Don Bernard Dessenguado, and Don Sebastian de Villa Viciosa. The first is a genius full of gall, an author born under the planet Saturn, a malicious mortal, whose pleasure consists in hating all the world, and is himself beloved by no body. As for Don Sebastian, he is a young fellow of candour, who will let nothing lie upon his conscience; he lately brought a performance on the stage, which had an extraordinary run; and now he has printed it, that he may no longer abuse the esteem of the public."

The charitable pupil of Gongora was going on in explaining the figures of this picture, which shifted so often to the view; when a gentleman belonging to the Duke de Medina Sidonia, came and interrupted him, saying, "Signior Don Fabricio, I was looking for you, in order to let you know that his grace would speak with you immediate-

ly, at his own house. Numez, who knew that a grandee's wishes cannot be too soon satisfied, quitted me in a trice, to go and wait upon his Mæcenas; while I remained very much assonished to hear him honoured with the appellation of Don, and see him thus become noble in despite of his sire, Master Chrysostom the barber.

CHAP. XIV.

Fabricius introduces Gil Blas to the service of Count Galiano, a Sicilian nobleman.

I Was fo defirous of feeing Fabricius again that I visited him early next morning. "Good morrow, (faid I, when I entered,) Signior Don Fabricio, the flower or rather glow worm of the Afturian nobility!" At these words he laughed heartily. "Thou hast observed then (cried he) that I am dubbed a Don?" "Yes, Mr Gentleman, (I replied) and give me leave to tell you, that when you recounted your metamorphosis yesterday, you forgot the best part of it." "I did fo, (anfwered he) but truly, if I have affuned that honourable title, it was not fo much with a view to gratify my own vanity, as to accommodate myself to that of others. Thou knoweft the humour of the Spaniards, they make no account of an honest man, if he has the misfortune to be both poor and mean born. I must tell thee, too, that I see so many people call themselves Don Francisco, Don Pedro, or Don what-you-will, that if there is no cheat

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in the case, thou wilt allow nobility to be a very common thing, and agree, that a plebeian of merit honours it by his affociation. But let us change the subject, (added he:) last night I supped at the Duke de Medina Sidonia's, where, among other guefts, was Count Galiano, a Sicilian nobleman of the first rank; and the conversation turning on the ridiculous effects of felf-love, I, charmed that I had it in my power to entertain the company on that subject, regaled them with the story of the homilies. Thou mayst well imagine they laughed heartily, and censured the archbishop as he deserved. This produced no bad effect for thee: for thou wast pitied by every body; and Count Galiano, after having asked a good many questions concerning thee, to which thou mayft believe I made fuitable answers, defired me to bring thee to his house. I was just now going in quest of thee, to conduct thee thither. I suppose he intends to offer thee the place of one of his fecretaries; and I advise thee to accept of it. The Count is rich, and spends like an ambassador, at Madrid. He is come to court, it is faid, to confer with the Duke of Lerma, about the crown demesnes which that minither designs to alienate in Sicily. In short. Count Galiano, though a Sicilian, feems to be generous, just, and open; and thou canst not do better than attach thyfelf to him. He is the man, in all probability, who is destined to enrich thee, according to what was foretold in thy behalf at Grenada." Vol. III. L

"I had refolved (said I to Nunnez) to live at large a little, and enjoy myself a good while before I should go to service again; but thou speakest to me of this Sicilian Count in such a manner, as induces me to change my resolution, and even to wish I was already in his family." "Thou mayst soon be there, (he replied,) or I am much mistaken." At the same time we went out together to the Count, who lodged in the house of his friend Don Sancho d'Avila, then in the country.

We found in the court a great number of pages and footmen, clothed in a livery equally rich and gay; and, in the anti-chamber, feveral ushers, gentlemen, and other officers, all magnificently dressed; but withal so ugity that they looked like a company of apes in Spanish garbs. There are figures, both of men and women, on which all art is

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Don Fabricius having sent in his name, was immediately introduced into a room, whither I followed him; and found the Count in his morning gown, sitting on a sopha, and drinking chocolate. We saluted him with all the demonstrations of the most profound respect; and he honoured us with an inclination of the head, accompanied by such a gracious smile, as at once gained my heart. A wonderful effect, though an ordinary one, which a favourable reception from the great produces in our breasts! They must receive us very ill, indeed,

indeed, before we be disgusted at their be-

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Having drank his chocolate, he amused himself some time in playing with a large baboon that fat by him, and was called Cupid. I don't know for what reason the name of that god was bestowed on this animal, unless it was, because it had all his malice: for it refembled him in nothing else. Such as it was, however, it did not fail to give vast delight to its master, who was fo much charmed with its merry tricks. that he hugged it inceffantly in his arms. Though Nunnez and I were not much diverted with the gambols of this beaft, we feigned ourselves enchanted with its performances; which pleased the Sicilian so much. that he suspended the pleasure he enjoyed in this pastime, to tell me, " Friend, you have it in your option to be one of my secretaries: if you like the place, I will give you two hundred pistoles a-year, without any other recommendation than that of Don Fabricio."-" My lord, (cried Nunnez,) I am bolder than Plato, who had not courage enough to answer for one of his friends, whom he fent to the tyrant Dionysius. I am not afraid of bringing reproaches upon myself, by vouching for my friend."

I thanked the Austrian poet with a low bow, for his obliging confidence; then addressing myself to my patron, assured him of my zeal and fidelity. This nobleman no sooner perceived that I relished his proposal, than

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he ordered his steward to be called; to whom having communicated something in a whisper, he said, "Gil Blas, I will tell you presently what is to be the nature of your employment. Mean while, you may follow my steward, who has received orders concerning you." I accordingly obeyed, leaving Fabricio with the Count and Cupid.

The steward, who was a most subtile Messineze, conducted me to his apartment, where he loaded me with civilities; and, sending for the tailor who had equipped the whole samily, ordered him to make for me, with all dispatch, a suit of clothes of the same magnificence as those of the principal officers. The tailor having taken measure of me, and retired, "As for your lodging, (said the Messineze,) I know a chamber that will exactly sit you. But have you breakfasted?" (added he.) When I answered in the negative, "Ah, poor lad, (said he,) why did you not speak? Come, I will shew you to a place where, thank heaven, you may have what you will for the asking."

So faying, he carried me down to the buttery, where he found the butter, a true Neapolitan, every whit as cunning as the Messenian. It might be said of him and the steward, These two make a pair. This honest butter, with five or six of his friends, were cramming themselves with ham, cold congue, and other relishing bits, which obliged them to redouble their draughts. We joined these hearty cocks, and affished them

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them in their attacks upon the Count's best wines. While this scene passed in the buttery, another such was acted in the kitchen: the cook also treated three or four tradesmen of his acquaintance, who filled their bellies with rabbit and partridge pies. The very scullions enjoyed themselves on what they could pilser; so that I thought myself in a house abandoned to pillage. Yet these were but trisses, in comparison to what I did not see.

CHAP. XV.

Count Galiano invests Gil Blas with an employment in his house.

I WENT to fetch my baggage to my new habitation; and, when I returned, the Count was at dinner with several noblemen and the poet Nunnez, who called for what he wanted with an easy air, and mingled in the conversation. Nay, I observed that every word he spoke afforded pleasure to the company. What a fine thing is genius! A man of wit can easily turn himself into all shapes.

I dined with the officers, who were treated pretty much in the same manner as our patron; and in theasternoonretired to my chamber, where I began to reflect on my condition.

"Well, Gil Blas, (faid I to myfelf,) thou art now in the service of a Sicilian Count, with whose real character thou art utterly unacquainted. If we may judge by appearance,

thou wilt be in this family like a fish in the water: but we must swear to nothing; and thou ought'st to distrust thy fate, the malignity of which thou hast but too often experienced. Besides, thou dost not know for what employment thou art retained. He has already two secretaries and a steward; what service then does he expect from thee? It looks as if he intended to make thee his Mercury. In good time! One cannot be on a better footing with a nobleman, in order to make his way to a good post. He who limits himself to honourable services only, moves slowly, step by step, and seldom gains his point at last."

While I was ingroffed by these fine reflections, a lacquey came to tell me, that all the company who had dined at our house were gone home, and that the Count wanted to speak with me. I slew instantly to his apartment, where I found him lying on his couch, ready to take his afternoon's nap, with his baboon, which always bore him company.

"Come hither, Gil Blas, (faid he,) take a chair, and listen to what I am going to say." I obeyed his orders, and he spoke to me in these terms: "Don Fabricio has told me, that, among other good qualities, you posses that of attaching yourself to your masters; and that you are a young man of incorruptible integrity. These two qualifications determined me to take you into my service; for I have great occasion for an affectionate domestic, who will espouse my interest, and employ his whole attention in husbanding my

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my estate. I am rich, 'tis true, but my yearly expence greatly exceeds my income. The reason is plain: I am plundered by my fervants, and live in my own house as if I was in a forest among robbers. I suspect my butler and steward of having a fellow-feeling the one with the other; and this is more than enough to ruin me from top to bottom. You will fay, if I have reason to think them rogues, why don't I turn them away? But where shall I find others made of a different kind of stuff? I will be satisfied with having them both observed by a man who shall have a right to inspect their conduct: and you are the person whom I have chosen for that commission; of which if you acquit yourfelf well, be affured that you shall not ferve an ungrateful master; for I will take care to procure for you a very advantageous fettlement in Sicily."

Having spoke thus, he dismissed me; and that very evening, in presence of all his domestics, I was proclaimed superintendant of the family. This did not give the Messineze and Neapolitan great mortification at first, because they looked upon me as a jolly companion, of a good composition; and concluded, that, by giving me a share of the spoil, they should be allowed to go on in their old course. But they looked very silly next day, when I declared to them, that I was an enemy to all misdemeanor. I demanded of the butler an account of the provisions; I visited the cellar, and took an inventory of every thing he had

in his charge; I mean, table-linen and plate, I then exhorted them to be faving of our pa. tron's wealth, to lay out with economy; and ended my advice, by protesting to them, that I would inform that nobleman of every thing that I should observe amiss in his house. did not stop here. Resolving to have a spy, who might discover if there was any finister intelligence between them, I cast my eyes on a feutlion, who being won by my promifes, affured me, that I could not have applied to a more proper person, to get notice of every thing that happened in the house: that the butler and steward were in a confederacy, and burnt the candle at both ends: that they daily secreted one half of the provision that was bought for the family: that the Neapelitan took care of a lady who lived opposite to the college of St Thomas; and that the Messenian entertained another at the Sun gate: that these two gentlemen sent all forts of provision to their nymphs every morning: and that the cook also dispatched favoury meffes to a widow of his acquaintance in the neighbourhood: and that, in confideration of his fervices to the other two, to whom he was entirely devoted, he dispofed, as they did, of the wines in the cellar: in thort, that these three domestics occasioned a most horrible expence in the Count's "If you doubt my report, (added the fcullion,) take the trouble of going tomorrow morning about feven o'clock, to the college of St Thomas, and you shall

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fee me loaded with a basket, which will change your doubts into certainty." "So, (said I to him) thou art agent to these gallant purveyors?" "I am (he replied) employed by the butler, and one of my comrades acts for the steward."

I had the curiofity to repair next morning, at the appointed hour, to the college of St Thomas, where I did not wait long for my fpy, whom I faw coming along with a huge basket filled with butchers meat, poultry, and venison. I took an inventory of the particulars, of which I formed in my pocket-book a small verbal process, that I went and shewed to my master, after having told the trencher-scraper, that he might execute his commission as usual.

The Sicilian nobleman, who was naturally passionate, resolved, in the first transport, to turn away the Neapolitan and Messenian; but after having reflected more coolly, contented himself with dismissing the last, to whose place I succeeded; so that my office of superintendant was suppressed soon after its creation: and truly I was not forry for it; for it was, properly speaking, no other than the honourable employment of a spy, and a post which had nothing substantial in it; whereas, by being made steward, I became master of the strong box, and that is every thing. The Steward always possesses the first rank among the domestics of a great family: and there are so many small perquisites attached to his administration,

administration, that he may grow rich, e.

ven though he be an honest man.

My Neapolitan, whose budget was not vet exhausted, observing my brutal zeal, that I got up every morning to fee and keep an account of what victuals were bought. no longer fecreted a part; but the raftal continued to purchase the same quantity as before. By this stratagem, increasing the profit he drew from the refuse of the table. which was his perquifite, he found himself in a condition to treat his charmer at leaft with dreffed victuals, if he could not furnil her with raw provision. In short, the devil loft nothing by this reformation, and the Count was not a whit the better for having the phænix of flewards in his fervice. The superabundance that I then perceived at every meal made me guess this new trick, which I immediately defeated, by retrenching what was superfluous in every course. This I did, however, with fuch prudence, that the alteration could not be perceived. One would have thought that there was still the fame profusion; and yet, by this œconomy, I considerably diminished the expence. This was what my patron required; he wanted to retrench, without appearing less magnificent: for his avarice was subordinate to his oftentation.

There was also another abuse to be reformed: I found the wine ran out apace. If, for example, twelve cavaliers happened to dine with my master, they would exhaust fifty, and sometimes

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fometimes five dozen of bottles. I was aftonished at this waste, and not doubting that there must be some roguery in the case, confulted my oracle, that is, my drudge, with whom I very often had private conferences, and who made a faithful report of every thing that was faid or done in the kitchen. where he was not in the least suspected. He told me, that the wafte, of which I complained, proceeded from a new league between the butler, cook, and those lacquies who filled the wine, and who carried off all the bottles half-emptied, which was afterwards fhared among the confederates. I fpoke to the footmen on this fubject, and threatened to turn them out of doors, if ever they should think proper to repeat this practice: upon which they were reclaimed. My master, whom I took care to advertise of the most minute things which I performed for his advantage, loaded me with praifes, and grew every day more and more fond of me: and I, in order to reward the good fervices of the scullion, created him cook's affiftant.

The Neapolitan was enraged to find me always on the catch with him; and was cruelly mortified with the contradictions he underwent, whenever he prefented his accounts to me; for, that I might pare his nails the closer, I took the trouble of going to market, to learn the price of meat, just before he went thither; and, as he attempted to impose upon me afterwards, gave him a vigorous repulse.

pulse. I was very well persuaded, that he cursed me an hundred times a day; but the subject of his maledictions hindered me from dreading their force. I can't imagine how he could bear my persecutions, and remain in the service of the Sicilian nobleman, Doubtless, in spite of all my endeavours, he

found his account in perseverance.

Fabricio, whom I frequently faw, and to whom I recounted all my hitherto unheard exploits, in quality of fleward, was more difposed to blame than applaud my conduct, "God grant, (faid he, one day,) that thou mayft be recompenfed for all this difinterest. edness; but between thee and me, I believe it would not fare the worse with thee, if thou wast not quite so rough with the butler." " How! (answered I) shall that robber charge in his bill ten pistoles for a fill that did not cost four, and I pass over that article?" " Why not? (he replied; coldly,) let him give thee the half of the superplus, according to custom. In good faith! my friend, (continued he, shaking his head,) you are a mere ninny, and, in all appearance, will grow grey in fervitude, fince you neglect to flay the eel while it is in your hand. Take my word for it, fortune resembles those brisk airy coquets who despise the gallant that stands upon ceremony.

I only laughed at the discourse of Nunnez, who laughed again in his turn; and would have persuaded me that he had only spoke in jest, being ashamed of having given me bad

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counsel in vain. I continued firm in the resolution of being always zealous and faithsul. I selt no inclination to be otherwise;
and I dare say, that, in four months, I saved
to my master by my occonomy, three thousand ducats at least.

CHAP. XVI.

An accident happens to Count Galiano's baboon, which is the cause of great affliction to that nobleman. Gil Blas falls sick; the consequence of his distemper.

A BOUT this time, the repose of the family was strangely disturbed by an accident which will feem trifling to the reader. though it turned out a very ferious matter to the fervants, and especially to me. pid, that baboon of which I have made mention, that animal fo beloved by our mafter, attempting one day to leap from one window to another, acquitted himself so ill in the performance, that he fell down into the court, and diflocated his leg. The Count no sooner understood this misfortune, than he uttered fuch piercing cries, that they were heard all over the neighbourhood; and in the excess of his grief, attacking all his fervants without exception, he had well nigh made a clean house. His fury, however, was limited to curfing our negligences, and abusing us, without sparing terms of reproach. He fent immediately for those furgeons who were most expert in fractures Vol. III. M

dislocated bones; and who having visited the patient's leg, reduced it, and applied bandages accordingly. But, though all of them assured him there was no danger, my master retained one of them in the house, to be always near the animal, until it was

perfectly cured.

I should be to blame if I passed over in silence the grief and anxiety which preyed upon the heart of the Sicilian nobleman. during the whole time of the cure. Will it be believed, that all the day he did not ftir from his dear Cupid? He was always prefent when it was dreffed, and got out of bed to visit him two or three times every night. But the most troublesome circumstance of all was, that every domestic in the family, and I in particular, were always up, that we might be at hand, to be fent wherefoever it should be thought proper, for the fervice of this ape. In a word, we had no rest in the house, till such time as this plaguy beaft, having recovered of his fall, betook himself again to his usual caperings and tumblings. After this, can we refuse to credit the report of Suetonius, when he fays, Caligula loved his horse to such a degree, that he bestowed upon him a house richly furnished, with officers to serve him, and even defigned to make him conful? My patron was no less charmed with his baboon, which he would willingly have created a corregidor, had it been in his power.

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An unlucky circumstance for me was, that I had furpassed all the valets in demonstrations of concern, that I might, in fo doing, make my court to my master; and undergone such fatigue in behalf of Cupid, that I fell fick upon it, and was feized with fuch a violent fever, that I loft my fenses, and know not how I was managed for fifteen days; during which, I was in a manner between life and death. This only I know, that my youth struggled fo successfully against the fever, and perhaps against the remedies that were administered, that, at length, I recovered my understanding. The first use I made of it, was to perceive that I was not in my own chamber; and wanting to know the reason, I asked it of an old woman who attended me: but the replied, that I must not speak; for the physician had expressly forbid it. When we are in good health, we commonly laugh at the doctor; but when we are fick, we calmly submit to his prescription.

I thought proper, therefore, to hold my tongue, how much foever I longed to converse with my nurse; and was engaged in reslections on this subject, when two spruce beaux entered, dressed in velvet, with very sine russled linen. I imagined they were two noblemen, friends of my master, who, out of consideration for him, came to see me. On this supposition, I made an effort to sit up, and shewed my respect by taking off my cap: but my nurse laid me all along again, and told me that these gentlemen were my

physician and apothecary.

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The doctor coming to the bed fide, felt my pulse, confidered my countenance, and observing all the symptoms of an immediate cure, assumed an air of triumph, as if he had greatly contributed to it : faying, that there was nothing wanting to finish the work, but a purge; after which, he might boast of having performed a fine cure. When he had spoke thus, he made the apothecary write a prescription, which while he dicta. ted, he viewed himfelf in a glass, adjusted his periwig, and made fuch grimaces, that I could not help laughing, in spite of my weakly condition. He then made me a folemn bow, and went away, much more engroffed by his own figure than by the medicines he had prescribed.

After his departure, the apothecary, who had not come thither for nothing, prepared himself for doing something, which may be eafily gueffed; whether he was afraid that the old woman could not acquit herfelf with dexterity enough, or wanted to operate himfelf, in order to enhance the value of his ware; but, with all his address, I don't know how it happened, the operation was scarce performed, when I restored to the operator all that he had given me, and left his velvet fuit in a fine pickle. He looked upon this accident as a misfortune annexed to pharmacy, and wiping himself with a towel, in filence, went away, refolving to make me pay the fcowrer, to whom he was certainly obliged to fend his clothes.

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He returned next morning, more plainly dressed, tho' he had no risk to run that day, in bringing the physic which the doctor had prescribed the night before. For I not only selt myself mending every moment, but had such an aversion, since the preceding day, to physicians and apothecaries, that I even cursed the universities where those gentlemen receive the power of slaying men with impunity.

In this disposition, I swore that I would take no more medicine, and wished Hippocrates at the devil, with all his gang. The apothecary, who did not mind what became of his composition, provided he was paid for it, left it on the table, and retired, without fpeaking a word. I ordered the villainous medicine to be thrown out at a window immediately, being so much prepossessed against it, that I should have thought myself poifoned, had I swallowed it. To this stroke of disobedience I added another. I broke filence, and told my nurse, in a peremptory tone, that I absolutely insisted on knowing what was become of my master. The old woman, who was apprehensive of exciting in me a dangerous emotion, should she gratify my curiofity; or refolving, perhaps, to irritate my diftemper by her obstinacy, made no answer; but I perfisted with so much pasfion, that she replied, at length, "Signior cavalier, you are now your own mafter. Count Galiano is gone back to Sicily."

I could not believe what I heard, and yet there was nothing more true. That noble-

man, the very fecond day of my diftemper, fearing that I would die at his house, had the generofity to order me to be transport. ed, with my little effects, to a hired room, where he had abandoned me, without ceremony, to Providence and the care of a nurse. In the interim, having received an order from court, obliging him to repass in. to Sicily, he fet out with fuch precipitation, that I was not fo much as thought of; whe. ther he already numbered me with the dead, or that people of quality are troubled with fhort memories.

My nurse informed me of all this, and likewise affured me, it was she who had called the physician and apothecary, that I might not perish for want of assistance. These comfortable news threw me into a profound reverie. Adieu, my advantageous fettlement in Sicily! My fanguine hopes farewell! "When any great misfortune happens to you, (fays a certain pope) examine yourself well, and you will always perceive that it was, in some measure, owing to your own fault." No disparagement to this holy father, I can't fee how I contributed to my own mischance on this occasion.

When I found the flattering chimeras, with which I had stuffed my imagination, vanished, the next thing that I concerned myfelf about was my portmanteau, which I ordered her to bring to my bed-fide, that I might examine it. I fighed, when I perceived it open, crying, Ah! my dear portmanteau, my only confola-

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W M. tion! you have been, I see, at the mercy of strangers. "No, no, Signior Gil Blas, (said the old woman,) don't be uneasy: nothing is stolen from you. I have protected your box, as if it had been my own honour."

I found in it the fuit of clothes which I had when I came into the Count's fervice: but I looked in vain for that which the Meffenian had ordered to be made for me. My mafter had not thought proper to leave it with me, or elfe fomebody had made free with it, during my delirium. All my other baggage remained, and even a great leathern purse that contained my money, which I reckoned twice, as I could not, at first, believe that there were but fifty pistoles remaining of two hundred and fixty that were in it before I fell fick. "What is the meaning of this, my good mother! (faid I to the nurse,) my finances are terribly diminished." " And yet nobody except myself have touched them, (faid the old woman,) and I have been as frugal as possible: but fickness is very expensive; one is always laying out. Here, (added the good mother, taking a packet of papers out of her pocket,) here is an account of the expence, as just as the current coin, which will shew that I have not employed a maravedi amis."

I glanced over the bill, which contained fifteen or twenty pages. Mercy upon me! what a quantity of poultry had been bought, while I was out of my fenses. There was in broths only, to the amount of twelve pistoles

at least. The other articles were answerable to this. It can't be imagined how much was laid out for wood, candles, water, and brooms. Nevertheless, swelled as this ac. count was, the fum total did not exceed thir. ty pistoles, confequently there ought to be a remainder of one hundred and eighty. This I represented to her; but the beldame, with an air of devotion, began to take all the faints to witness, that there were but fourfcore piftoles in the purse, when the Count's butler gave her the charge of my portmanteau. "What is that you fay, goody? (cried I, with precipitation,) was it the butler who put my things into your hands?" "Without doubt, it was he, (she replied,) by this token, that when he gave me them, he faid, "Good mother, when Signior Gil Blas is stiff, don't fail to treat him with a good funeral; for there is money enough in the portmanteau to answer the expence."

"Ah, damned Neapolitan! (cried I,) I am no longer at a loss to know how my money is gone: you have swept it away, to make yourself some amends for the thess I hindered you to commit." After this apostrophe, I thanked heaven that the knave had not carried off the whole. Whatever reason I had, however, to accuse the butler of having robbed me, I could not help thinking, that the nurse might, possibly, have done the deed. My suspicion sell sometimes on one, sometimes on the other; but it was still the same thing to me.

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I faid nothing to the old woman. I did not even cavil at the articles of her conscionable bill; for I should have got nothing by wrangling; and everyone must understand his trade. Myresentment, therefore, was contented with paying and dismissing her three days after.

I believe, when she went from me, she advertised the apothecary, that she had been dismissed, and that I was well enough to decamp, without taking my leave of him; for, in a moment after, he came to me, quite out of breath, and presented his bill, in which, under names that were utterly unknown to me, although I had been a physician, he had fet down all the pretended medicines with which he had furnished me, while I was out of my fenfes. This bill might be justly faid to have been written in the true spirit of an apothecary; and accordingly we disputed about the payment of it. I infifted on his abating one half of the fum he demanded: he fwore he would not abate one maravedi. Confidering, however, that he had to do with a young man, who might give him the slip, by quitting Madrid that very day, he chose rather to be contented with what I offered, that is, three times the value of his drugs, than to run the risk of lofing the whole. I gave him the money with infinite regret, and he retired, fully revenged for the small disgrace he had suffered on the day of the glyster.

The physician appeared almost at the same time; for those animals are always at the tail

of one another. I paid him for his vifits. which had been very numerous, and fent him away very well fatisfied. But before he would leave me, in order to prove that he had earned his fees, he related all the mortal fymptoms which he had prevented. in my distemper: a task he performed in very learned terms, and with an agreeable air, though it was altogether above my com. prehension. When I had dispatched him, I thought I had got rid of all the ministers of the fates. But I was mistaken: a furgeon, whom I had never feen, entered my apartment, and having faluted me very respectfully, expressed great joy in seeing me out of danger; a deliverance which the faid) he attributed to two copious bleedings that he had performed, and some cuppingglasses which he had the honour to apply. This was another feather to be plucked from my wing: I was fain to pay tribute to the furgeon also. After so many evacuations, my purse became so feeble, that it was little better than a lifeless corse; so little of the radical moisture remained.

I began to lose courage, when I saw myfelf relapsing into a state of misery. I had, while I ferved my last masters, conceived too great affection for the conveniencies of life, and could no longer, as formerly, look upon indigence with the eye of a cynic philosopher. I will own, however, that I was very much in the wrong, to let myfelf fall a prey to melancholy. After having for

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often experienced, that fortune no fooner overthrew than she raised me up again, I ought to have regarded the troublesome situation in which I was, as another introduction to prosperity.

THE END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

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ADVENTURES

OF

GILBLAS OF SANTILLANE

BOOK VIII.

CHAP. I.

Gil Blas contracts a good acquaintance, and obtains a post that consoles him for Count Galiano's ingratitude. The history of Don Valeris de Luna.

MY not having heard of Nunnez all this time, surprised me so much, that I concluded he must be in the country; and, as soon as I could walk, went to his lodgings, where I understood that he had actually gone to Andalusia, three weeks before, with the Duke de Medina Sidonia. One morning, at waking, Don Melchior de la Ronda came into my head; and remembering that I had promised to him, while I was

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at Grenada, to visit his nephew, if ever I should return to Madrid, I resolved to keep my promise that very day. Having got a direction to the house of Don Balthazar de Zuniga, I repaired thither, and asked for Signior Joseph Navarro, who soon appeared. When I faluted him, he received me politely, but coldly, although I had fignified my name. I did not know how to reconcile this frozen reception with the character I had heard of this clerk of the kitchen; and was going away, with a refolution to fave myself the trouble of a second visit, when, all of a fudden, affuming an open, smiling air, he cried, with a good deal of emotion, " Ah! Signior Gil Blas de Santillane, pray pardon the reception I have given you. My memory had betrayed my inclination: I had forgot your name, and little thought that you was the cavalier of whom mention is made, in a letter which I received from Grenada about four months ago.

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"How rejoiced am I to see you! (added he, throwing his arms about my neck, with transport,) my uncle Melchior, whom I love and honour as a father, conjures me, if perchance I should have the honour of seeing you, to treat you in the same manner as if you was his son, and to employ, if there should be occasion, my own credit, and that of my friends, in your behalf. He has praised the qualities of your head and heart, in such terms as would have interested me in your favour, even if I had Not. III.

not been engaged thereto by his recommendation. I beg, therefore, that you will look upon me as a man to whom my uncle has imparted, by letter, all his fentiments with regard to you. I offer you my friend. ship, and I hope you will not refuse me

yours."

I answered with that gratitude which I owed to the polite behaviour of Joseph; and, like people of warmth and fincerity, we contracted an intimacy on the fpot; and I did not scruple to disclose the situa. tion of my affairs, which he no fooner heard. than he faid, " I undertake to procure a place for you; and, in the mean time, don't fail to come and dine with me every day. You will fare better here than at your eating-house." The offer was too agreeable to a poor creature just come out of a fit of illness, who had been used to good living, to be rejected. I accepted the invitation, therefore, and recruited fo well in that family, that, in fifteen days, I had the face of a Bernardine monk. Melchior's nephew feemed to make up his pack rarely; but how could it be otherwise? He had three strings to his bow; was, at the same time, butler, steward, and clerk of the kitchen; besides, (our friendship apart) I believe the comptroller of the house and he had a very good understanding together.

I was perfectly recovered, when my friend Joseph, seeing me come in one day, to dine as usual, made up to me, with a gay air, and

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faid, "Signior Gil Blas, I have a pretty good place in view for you. You must know that the Duke of Lerma, prime minister of the Spanish crown, in order to devote himself entirely to affairs of state, entrusts two persons with his own concerns. Don Diego de Monteser has the care of gathering his rents; and his houshold expence is managed by Don Rodrigo de Calderona. These two men, in whom he can confide, exercife their employments with absolute authority, without the least dependence on one another. Don Diego usually keeps in his fervice two flewards to receive the cash; and as I understood this morning that he had dismissed one of them, I have been to ask the place for you. Signior de Montefer, who knows me, and of whose friendship I may boast, has granted it, without any difficulty, on my recommendation of your morals and capacity. We will go to his house this afternoon."

We went thither accordingly. I was very graciously received, and installed in the employment of the steward, who had been dismissed. His office consisted in visiting the farms, keeping them in repair, and receiving the rents: in a word, I was concerned in the country estate, and every month gave in my accounts to Don Diego, who examined them with great attention. This was what I wished. Although my integrity had been so ill repaid by my last master, I was resolved to continue always in the same path.

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One day, having got notice that a fire had happened in the castle of Lerma, and that more than one half of it had been reduced to ashes, I went thither immediately to take an account of the damage; and having in. formed myself exactly, upon the spot, of all the circumstances of the fire, I composed an ample relation of it, which Montefer shewed to the Duke of Lerma. This minister, not. withstanding the affliction he was in to hear fuch bad news, was struck with the relation, and could not help asking who was the author: Don Diego not only fatisfied him in that particular, but also spoke so much in my favour, that his excellency remembered me fix months after, on the occasion of a story, which I am going to recount, and without which, perhaps, I should never have been employed at court. Here it is:

" At that time, there lived in the ffreet of the Infantas, an old lady called Inefilla de Cantarilla, whose birth was not certainly known. Some faid that she was the daughter of a lute-maker: and others, that her father was a commander of the order of St Iago. Be that as it will, she was a prodigy. ture bestowed upon her the singular privilege of charming the male-fex, during the whole course of her life, which exceeded feventy-five years. She had been idolized by the noblemen of the old court, and faw herself adored by those of the new. that spares not even beauty, had exerted it felf upon her's in vain; though he had withered

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thered it, he could not deprive her of the power to please: and a noble air, an enchanting wit, and graces that were peculiar to her, made her inspire the men with pas-

fion, even in her old age.

One of the Duke of Lerma's fecretaries, called Don Valerio de Luna, a cavalier of five and twenty, faw Inefilla, and fell in love He declared himself in the most with her. passionate terms, and pursued his prey with all the fury that love and youth can inspire. The lady, who had her reasons for not complying with his wishes, did not know how to moderate his flame. One day, however, thinking the had found the means, the carried the young man into her closet, and pointing to a clock that stood upon a table, "You fee (faid she) what hour it is—on the fame day and hour did I come into the world, feventy-five years ago; and do you really think it becomes one of my age to be engaged in love intrigues? Recal your reason, my child, and stifle those sentiments which are so unsuitable both to you and me." At this fensible advice, the cavalier, who no longer acknowledged the authority of reason, answered the lady with all the impetuosity of a man possessed by the most violent emotions, "Cruel Inefilla! why have you recourse to fuch frivolous remonstrances? Do you imagine that they can change you in my eyes? Don't flatter yourself with such a vain hope. While you are fuch as I behold you, or while my view is fascinated by the charm, I can-N 3 not

not cease to love you." "Well then, (said she) fince you are so obstinate as to persist in the resolution of fatiguing me with your addresses, my house shall be no longer open to you. I forbid you to come near it, and

defire to fee you no more."

You will, perhaps, believe, after this, that Don Valerio, disconcerted at what he had heard, made an honourable retreat. the contrary, he became still more importunate. Love produces the same effects in its votaries, as wine does in drunkards. cavalier begged, fighed, and making a fudden transition fromentreaties to rage, attempted to enjoy by force, what he could not otherwise obtain. But the lady resisting with courage, cried, with an air of indignation, " Hold! rash wretch! I will soon bridle your impious ardour. Know that you are my fon." Don Valerio was confounded at these words, which suspended the violence of his passion. But imagining that Inesilla fooke thus only to be rid of his folicitations, he answered, "You have invented that fable to elude my desires." "No, no, (faid she, interrupting him,) I reveal a mystery, which I should always have concealed, had not you reduced me to the necessity of difclosing it. Six and twenty years ago, I was in love with Don Pedro de Luna, your father, who was then Governor of Segovia, and you became the fruit of our mutual palfion. He owned you for his fon, gave you good education; and although he had not been

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been without other children, your good qualities would have determined him to leave you a fortune. I, for my part, did not forfake you; as foon as you began to appear in the world, I allured you to my house, in order to inspire you with that polite behaviour which is fo necessary to a gallant man, and which women only can beflow. I did more, I employed all my credit to introduce you into the prime minister's service. In short, I have interested myself for you, as I ought to do for a fon. After this declaration, take your own measures. If you can purify your fentiments, and look upon me only as a mother, I do not banish you from my fight, but will treat you with all the tenderness I have hitherto preserved: but if you are incapable of that effort, which both nature and reason demand, fly this moment, and deliver me from the horror of your presence."

While Inefilla spoke in this manner, Don Valerio remained in profound silence. He seemed to recal his virtue, and endeavour to vanquish himself; but he meditated another design, and prepared a quite different spectacle for his mother. Being unable to console himself for the insurmountable obstacle that opposed his wishes, he basely yielded to his despair: he drew his sword, and plunged it in his own bosom; punishing himself like another Œdipus; with this difference, that the Theban plucked out his own eyes, out of grief for having commit-

ted the crime; whereas the Castilian stab. bed himself, because he could not commit it.

The unhappy Don Valerio did not die immediately of the blow he had given himself: but had time to repent, and ask pardon of heaven, for having taken away his own life. As he left, by his death, a vacancy in the post of Secretary to the Duke of Lerma, that minister, who had not forgot my account of the sire, nor the good character he had heard of me, chose me to fill the place of this young gentleman.

CHAP. II.

Gil Blas is presented to the Duke of Lerma, who receives him into the number of his secretaries; sets him to work, and is satisfied with his performance.

formed me of this agreeable news, and faid, "Friend Gil Blas, though I feel some regret in losing you, I love you too well, not to be overjoyed at your succeeding Don Valerio. You will not fail to make a fine fortune, provided you follow two pieces of advice which I have to give you. The first is, to appear so much attached to his excellency, that he shall never doubt of your being entirely devoted to his will. And the second is, to make your court to Signior Don Rodrigo de Calderona; for that man moulds the mind of his master like wax. If you have the good fortune

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lut 16 fortune to acquire the good will of that favourite fecretary, you will go a great way

in a very little time."

" Signior, (faid I to Don Diego, after having thanked him for his good advice,) tell me, if you please, Don Rodrigo's cha-I have often heard him spoke of, and represented bad enough; but I have not much confidence in the pictures which people draw of those who have posts at court; though fometimes, I believe, they do not judge amiss. Pray, tell me then, what you think of Signior Calderona." "You asked me a very delicate question, (replied the overseer, with a satirical smile,) I would tell any body but you, without hesitation, that he is a very honourable gentleman, of an unblemished character. But I will deal more frankly with you; for, besides that I believe you a young man of discretion, I think it my duty to talk openly to you of Don Rodrigo, fince I have advised you to cultivate him with care; otherwise, I should only oblige you by halves.

"You must know then, that from a simple domestic of his excellency, when he was only Don Francis de Sandoval*, this man has arrived, by degrees, at the post of his first secretary. There never was a prouder man;

^{*} Francis de Roxas de Sandoval, cardinal and duke of Lermo, grandee of Spain, by three feveral claims, was chief favourite and prime minister to Philip the third, whom he governed with absolute power for many years, but was at last disgraced, October 4. 1618, and died seven years after, in his retirement to Valladolid.

he looks upon himself as the Duke of Ler. ma's colleague, and, at bottom, he may be faid to share with him the authority of prime minister, since he bestows posts and govern. ments on whom he pleases to oblige. the public often murmurs at; but he gives himself no trouble about the matter: provided an affair yields him a handsome present, he bids defiance to censure. You will easi. ly conceive, from what I have faid, (added Don Diego,) how you are to behave to fuch a haughty mortal." "O yes! (faid I,) leave that to me. It will be very unlucky, indeed, if I cannot gain his favour. one knows the foible of a person whom he wishes to please, he must be no conjurer if he fails of success." "Well then, (replied Monteser,) I will now present you to the Duke of Lerma."

We went immediately to the house of that minister, whom we found giving audience in a great hall, where there was more company than at court. Here I saw commanders and knights of Calatrava and St Iago, soliciting for governments and viceroyalties; bishops, who, being sickly at their own dioceses, defired to be made archbishops, only for the change of air; and some holy fathers, of the order of St Dominic and St Francis, who laid claim to the mitre, with great humility. I likewise observed some half-pay officers, who asked the same part that Captain Chinchilla had formerly performed; that is, spent all they had in dancing attendance for a pension.

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If the Duke did not gratify all their defires, he, at least, received their petitions with great affability; and I perceived that he answered very politely to those who spoke to him.

We waited patiently, until he had dispatched all these supplicants: then Don Diego said to him, "My Lord, here is Gil Blas de Santillane, that young man whom your excellency has chosen to supply the place of Don Valerio." At these words the Duke, casting his eyes upon me, faid, in a very obliging manner, "That I had already merited it, by the fervices I had done him." He afterwards carried me into his closet, to discourse with me in private, or rather, judge of my understanding by my conversation. He defired to know who I was, and the life I had hitherto led, exacting of me a fincere narration of the whole. What a detail was this for me to give! there was no thinking of telling lies before a prime minister of Spain. On the other hand, I had fo many things to tell at the expence of my vanity, that I could not refolve on a general confession. How should I extricate myself from this embarraffment? I took the resolution of embellishing the truth in those parts where it would have offended in its nakedness; but he did not fail to discover it, in spite of all my skill. " Monsieur de Santillane, (faid he, with a smile, when I had finished my story I see you have been in your time, a little upon the Picaro *." I answered,

Picaro, a Spanish word signifying rogue.

answered, with a blush, "Your excellency ordered me to be fincere, and I have obeyed." "I am obliged to thee for it, (he replied;) go, my child, thou hast come off very cheap. I am astonished that thou wast not un. done by ill example. There are many honest people who would have turned great rogues had fortune put them to the same trials.

" Friend Santillane, (continued the mini. fter) forget thy past life; and remember that thou now belongest to the king, in whose fervice thou wilt be employed for the future. Follow me, and I will make thee acquainted with the nature of thy office." He carried me into a little closet adjoining to his own, where I faw, upon shelves, twenty thick regifters in folio. "It is here, (faid he) where thou must work. These registers compose a dictionary of all the noble families within the kingdoms and principalities of the Spanish monarchy. Every book contains, in alphabetical order, the abridged history of & very gentleman; in which are recounted the services which he and his ancestors have performed to the state, as well as the affain of honour in which they have been enga-There is also mention made of their fortune, their morals, and, in a word, of all their bad qualities: fo that, when they come to folicit favours at court, I fee, with one glance of my eye, whether or not they deferve them. That I may have an exact information of all these things, I have penfionaries every where, who take care to get

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pe the get good intelligence, which they transmit to me in writing; but as their memorials are often diffuse, and stuffed with provincial modes of expression, they must be rendered more concise, and the diction polished; because his Majesty sometimes orders these registers to be read to him. In this work, which requires a perspicuous stile, I will em-

ploy thee this very moment."

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So faying, he took out of a porto folio. full of papers, a memorial, which he put into my hand; and went out of my closet leaving me at liberty to perform my coup d'effai. I read the piece, which feemed not only stuffed with barbarous terms, but even filled with indecent passion; though it had been composed by a monk in the town of Solfona. He there tore to pieces, without mercy, a good Catalonian family; and God knows if he spoke truth: it looked so much like a scandalous libel, that I at first made fome scruple of working upon it; being afraid of making myself an accomplice in the calumny. Nevertheless, novice as I was at court, I went on, at the hazard of his reverence's foul; and placing all the iniquity, if there was any in the case, to his account, began to dishonour, in good Castilian phrafes, two or three generations of honest men, perhaps.

I had already finished four or five pages, when the duke, impatient to know how I performed, returned and said, "Santillane, shew me what thou hast done; for I long to Vol. III. O fee

fee it :" At the fame time, throwing his eyes upon my work, he read the beginning with great attention; and feemed fo well fatisfied, that I was furprifed at his commendation. " Prepossessed as I was in thy favour, (faid he) I confess thou hast surpassed my expec. tation: thou writest not only with all the clearness and distinction that I defired, but thy stile is also spirited and easy: thou justi. fiest the choice I have made of thy pen, and confolest me for the loss of thy predecessor." He would not have confined my eulogium to this, had he not been interrupted by the arrival of his nephew the Count de Lemos. whom his excellency embraced feveral times, and received in fuch a manner as gave me to understand that he loved him with a tender affection. They shut themselves up together, to talk in private of a family affair, which I shall have occasion to mention in the fequel; and with which the minister, at that time, feemed to be more engroffed than with the business of the king.

While they were engaged together, I heard the clock strike twelve; and as I knew that the secretaries and clerks quitted their offices at that hour, to go and dine somewhere, I lest my performance, and went out, not with a view of going to Monteser's house, for he had already paid my appointments, and I had taken my leave of him, but to the most same ordinary of the court end of the town: a common eating-house would not now serve my turn. Remember that thou now

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belongest to the king. These words which the duke had pronounced, were seeds of ambition that every instant sprung up in my soul.

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CHAP. III.

He learns that his post is not altogether without mortifications. His uneasiness at this piece of news, which obliges him to alter his conduct.

Was at great pains, when I enered, to let the landlord know that I was fecretary to the prime minister; and, in that quality, I did not know what to order for my dinner: I was afraid of bespeaking something that might favour of parfimony, and therefore bade him dress what he himself should think proper. Accordingly he regaled me in a fumptuous manner, and I was ferved with marks of respect which gave me still more pleasure than the good cheer. When the bill was brought, I threw a pistole upon the table, leaving to the waiters one fourth of it at least; for so muchrem ained over and above the reckoning. After which I strutted away with such gestures, as shewed that I was mighty well pleafed with my own person.

About twenty yards from hence, there was a large house, in which noblemen that were strangers commonly lodged. Here I hired an apartment, consisting of five or six rooms handsomely furnished, as if I already enjoyed two or three thousand ducats a year; and even paid the first month per advance.

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Afterwards, returning to work, I spent the whole afternoon in continuing what I had begun in the morning. There were two more secretaries in a closet next to mine; but they only transcribed what the duke gave them to copy. With these I contracted an acquaintance that very evening, when we went out together; and, in order to gain their friendship the sooner, carried them to my tavern, where I ordered for supper the best dishes in season, with the most delicate wines.

We fat down together, and began to converse with more gaiety than wit; for to do justice to my guests, I soon perceived that they did not owe to their genius the places which they possessed. They were connoisseurs, indeed, in the different kinds of handwriting; but they had not the least tincture

of university education.

To make amends for this, they understood their own little interest to admiration; and were not so much intoxicated with the honour of serving the prime minister, but that they complained of their situation. "We have (said one of them) already exercised our employment sive months at our own expence, without touching one farthing; and, which is worse, our appointments are not regulated; nor do we know upon what sooting we are." "As for my part, (said the other) I would with all my heart put up with twenty stripes, instead of appointments, to be allowed the liberty of engaging myself elsewhere;

elsewhere; for I dare not retire of my own accord, nor demand my dismission, after the secrets with which I have been entrusted; else I might chance to visit the tower of Se-

govia, or castle of Alicant."

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" How do you make shift to live then? (faid I to them:) I suppose you have fortunes of your own." They answered, they had very little money; but, luckily for them, they lodged at the house of an honest widow, who gave them credit for their board, at the rate of one hundred pistoles a-year from each. All this discourse, of which I did not lose one word, diffipated in an instant the fumes of my pride: I concluded, that no more confideration would be paid to me than to others; consequently, I had no cause to be so much charmed with my post, which was not quite fo substantial as I had imagined; and that, in short, I could not be too frugal of my purse. These reflections cured me of my extravagance. I began to repent of having invited my fellow-fecretaries, wished the repast at an end; and, when the bill was brought, disputed with the landlord on every article.

My friends and I parted at midnight; because I did not press them to stay longer. They went home to their widow, and I to my superb apartment, which I now was mad with myself for having hired; and which I sirmly resolved to leave at the month's end. It was to no purpose for me to lie down on a good bed; my anxiety banished all repose; and I

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passed

passed the night in contriving means of be.
ing paid by his majesty for my work. I
stuck, on this occasion, to Monteser's advice,
and rose with a resolution of going to pay
my respects to Don Rodrigo de Calderona.
I was in a very proper disposition to appear
before such a proud man, because I found

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I had occasion for his protection.

I repaired then to the fecretary, whose lodging communicated with that of the Duke of Lerma, and even equalled it in magnificence: by the furniture, it would have been a difficult matter to distinguish the master from the man. I fent in my name, as the fucceffor of Don Valerio; but, for all that, I waited in the anti-chamber upwards of an hour. " Mr New Secretary, (faid I to myfelf at this juncture,) have a little patience, if you please: I find you must dance attendance yourfelf, before you make other people do fo." The chamber-door being opened at length, I entered, and advanced towards Don Rodrigo, who, having just finished a billet-doux to his charming Sirena, was putting it into Pedrillo's hands. I had never appear. ed before the archbishop of Grenada, the Count Galiano, nor even the prime minister, fo respectfully as I presented myself to the eyes of Signior de Calderona, whom I faluted with a bow to the very ground, begging his protection in fuch submissive terms, that I cannot remember them without a blush. My meanness would have turned to my prejudice, in the opinion of a real gentleman; but

but he was pleased with my groveling behaviour, and assured me, obligingly enough, that he would let slip no opportunity of

doing me fervice.

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I thanked him with great demonstrations of zeal for his avourable fentiments of me; and having vowed eternal attachment to him, took my leave, for fear of incommoding him, and begged he would excuse me, if I had interrupted him in his important affairs. foon as I had acted this mean part, I went to my office, where I finished the task which had been imposed. The duke, who did not fail to come thither in the morning, was no less pleafed with the end, than he had been with the beginning of my work; and faid, "This is extremely well: write as well as thou canst this abridged history in the register of Catalonia: after which, thou shalt take another information out of the porto folio, and manage it in the same manner." I had a pretty long conversation with his excellency, and was charmed with his sweetness and familiarity of behaviour. What a difference was there between him and Calderona! They were two figures strongly contrasted.

I dined that day in an eating-house for a moderate expence; and resolved to go thither incognito every evening, until I should see the effect of my complaisance and servility. I had money sufficient to maintain me three months, during which I resolved to work at a venture; proposing, as the shortest sollies are the least prejudicial, to

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abandon the court and all its tinfel, if I should receive no falary before the expiration of that term. This, therefore, was my plan. I spared nothing, during two months, to please Calderona; but he took so little notice of my endeavours, that despairing of success, I changed my conduct towards him; and exerted myself wholly in profiting by those moments of conversation which I had with the duke.

CHAP IV.

Gil Blas gains the favour of the Duke of Lerma, who intrusts him with a secret of great importance.

Lthough his grace, to use the expresfion, only just appeared before me, and vanished again, every day, I insensibly rendered myself so agreeable to his excellency, that he faid to me one afternoon, " Hark'ye, Gil Blas, I like thy disposition and understanding, and have a regard for thee accordingly. Thou art a zealous faithful young fellow, extremely intelligent and discreet; so that I don't think I shall misplace my confidence, if I bestow it upon thee." I threw myself on my knees, when I heard these words; and after having respectfully kiffed one of his hands, which he held out to raise me up, answered, " Is it possible then, that your excellency can deign to honour me with fuch extraordinary favour? What fecret enemies will your goodness raise

raise up against me! But there is only one man whose hatred I dread, and that is Don

Rodrigo de Calderona."

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" Thou hast nothing to apprehend from that quarter, (replied the duke:) I know Calderona: he has been attached to me from his infancy; and, I may venture to fay, his fentiments are fo conformable to mine, that he careffes those whom I love, and hates those who disoblige me: instead of dreading his aversion, thou mayst, on the contrary, depend upon his friendship." this, I could plainly perceive, that Signior Don Rodrigo was a cunning rogue, who had got poffession of his excellency's foul, and that I could not be too cautious with him. "To begin (added the duke) with putting thee in possession of my confidence, I will disclose to thee a design which I have projected; for it is necessary that thou shouldst be informed of it, that thou mayst acquit thyself the better of the commissions in which I intend to employ thee. I have a long time beheld my authority in general respected, my decisions blindly followed, and commissions, employments, governments, viceroyalties, and benefices, disposed of according to my wish. I may be faid to reign in Spain; and it is impossible to push my fortune farther; but I would fecure it against the storms that begin to threaten me; and, for that effect, want to have my nephew, the Count de Lemos, for my fuccessor in the ministry." Here

Here the duke, observing that I was extremely surprised at what I heard, said, "I see your surprise, Santillane; you think it very strange that I should prefer my nephew to my own son the Duke d'Uzeda: but you must know, that this last has too narrow a genius to fill my place; besides, I am his enemy: he has found the secret of being agreeable to the king, who wants to make him his favourite; and this is what I cannot bear. The favour of a sovereign is like the possession of a woman whom we adore: a piece of happiness of which we are so jealous, that we cannot resolve to share it with a rival, however connected to us by the ties of blood and friendship.

" I now disclose to thee (continued his grace) the very bottom of my foul. I have already attempted to ruin the Duke d'Uzeda with his Majesty; and as I could not fucceed, I have changed my battery. fign that the Count de Lemos shall infinuate himself into the good graces of the prince of Spain. Being gentleman of his bed-chamber, he has an opportunity of talking with him every moment; and besides that he does not want wit, I know a fure method for him to succeed in that enterprize. By this stratagem, I will oppose my nephew to my fon, and breed a division between the two cousins, which will oblige them both to court my support, the awe of which will keep them submissive to my will. This (added he) is my scheme; and thy affistance will be very ferviceable to me: for I will always

always fend thee to the Count de Lemos, and thou shalt report from him whatever

he shall have occasion to impart."

After this confidence, which I regarded as ready money, I no longer felt any difquiet. "At length (faid I to myfelf) I am under the fpout; a shower of gold will certainly rain upon me; for it is impossible but that the confident of a man, who, by way of excellence, is called the great pillar of the Spanish monarchy, should be in a very short time loaded with wealth." Full of such agreeable hope, I saw, with indifference, my poor purse giving up the ghost.

CHAP. V.

Gil Blas is overwhelmed with joy, honour, and distress.

THE minister's affection for me was soon perceived; for he affected to give marks of it in public, giving me the charge of his porto solio, which he used to carry in his own hand to council. This novelty making people look upon me as a small favourite, excited the envy of several persons; and was the occasion of my receiving a great deal of court holy water. -My two neighbours, the secretaries, were not the last in complimenting me upon my approaching greatness; and they invited me to sup at their widow's, not so much in return for my treat, as with a view to engage me in their behalf for the suture. I was welcomed every where; e-

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ven the haughty Don Rodrigo changed his behaviour to me, and now called me no. thing but Signior de Santillane; though, before that, he only favoured me with you, always omitting the term Signior. He loaded ed me with civilities, especially when he thought our patron might observe him: but I assure you he had no fool to deal with; I answered all his kindness with equal politeness; and the more so, the more I hated him in my heart: an old courtier could not

have excelled me in this particular.

I likewife accompanied my lord duke to court, whither he commonly went three times a-day. In the morning, he entered his Majesty's bed-chamber as foon as he was awake; and kneeling by the bed fide, difcourfed of those things that were to be done in the day; having also dictated to his mafter what was to be faid, he retired; and returned immediately after dinner, not to talk on state affairs, but to converse on entertaining fubjects, and regale the king with all the merry adventures which happened in Madrid, and of which he was always very early informed. Last of all, he visited him, for the third time, in the evening, when he gave fuch an account as he thought proper of what he had done through the day, and in a careless manner asked his Majesty's orders for to-morrow. While he was with the king, I remained in the anti-chamber, where I saw people of quality, devoted to the idol Favour, court my converlation, and think themselves

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themselves happy, if I entered into discourse with them. How, after this, could I help thinking myself a man of consequence? There are a great many at court who have the same opinion of themselves, upon a much more slender foundation.

One day, I had still more food for my vanity: the king, to whom the duke had spoke very advantageously of my stile, was very curious to fee a specimen of it. Upon which his excellency made me take up the Catalonian register, and carrying me into the prefence, ordered me to read the first story which I had abridged. If I was at first disturbed by the presence of the prince, I was soon composed by that of the minister; and read my performance, which his Majesty heard with pleasure. He expressed his satisfaction, and even recommended me to the minister's protection. This did not at all diminish the pride of my heart; and the conversation which I had a few days after with the Count de Lemos, quite filled my head with the ideas of ambition. I went to this nobleman from his uncle, and finding him at the prince's court, presented to him a letter of credentials; in which the duke told him, that he might or pen himself to me, as to one who was perfeetly well acquainted with their defign, and chosen by him as their common messenger. The Count having read this billet, conducted me into a room, and having locked the door, fpoke in this manner: "Since you enjoy the confidence of the Duke of Lerma, I don't doub VOL. III.

doubt that you deferve it; and I ought to make no difficulty in giving you mine also, You must know then, that matters go on fwimmingly. The prince of Spain diffin. guishes me from all the noblemen who are personally attached to him, and who study to please him. I had this morning a private conversation with him, in which he feemed chagrined at feeing himfelf, through the king's avarice, unable to follow the dictates of his generous heart, or even to fpend like a prince. On this occasion, I did not fail to lament his fituation: and profiting by the opportunity, promifed to bring a thoufand pistoles to him at his levee to-morrow, as an earnest of greater sums which I have undertaken to furnish him with in a very little time. He was charmed with my promise; and I am certain of captivating his favour, if I keep my word. Go and tell these circumstances to my uncle, and return in the evening, to inform me of his fentiments of the matter."

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I quitted the Count de Lemos immediately, and went back to the Duke of Lerma, who, on myreport, sent to Calderona for a thousand pistoles, which he gave me to carry in the evening to the count. This I performed; saying to myself, "Oho! I now see plainly what the infallible method is which the minister takes to succeed in his enterprize: upon my soul! he is in the right; and, to all appearance, these prodigalities will not ruin his fortune: I can easily guess from whose coffers these

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these pistoles are taken; but after all, it is but reasonable that the father should maintain the fon." The Count de Lemos, when we parted, faid foftly, " Farewell, dear confident; the prince of Spain is a little amorous: you and I must have a conference on that subject one of these days: I foresee that I shall have occasion for your dexterity very soon." I came home musing on these words, which were not at all ambiguous, and which filled me with joy. "The devil! (faid I) I am just on the eve of becoming Mercury to the heir of the kingdom." I did not examine into the goodness or badness of the office; the quality of the gallant laid my virtue afleep. What glory was it for me to be made minister of pleasure to a great prince! " Softly, Mr Gil Blas, (some folks will say) the business was only to make you deputy minister. I own it: but, at bottom, the honour of both these posts is equal, the difference lies in the profits only."

While I executed these noble commissions, advancing every day farther and farther in the good graces of the prime minister; with such enchanting hopes, how happy should I have been, if ambition had secured me from the cravings of hunger! More than two months had elapsed since I had quitted my magnificent apartment, and hired a small chamber very frugally surnished. Although this gave me some pain, as I came out early in the morning, and did not go home to bed before night, lbore my fortune patiently. The whole day appeared

I appeared upon my theatre, that is, in the duke's house, and played the part of a man of consequence: but when I had crept up into my garret, my importance vanished. and nothing remained but poor Gil Blas without money; and, which is worse, with. out any thing that could fetch it. Though I had not been too proud to discover my ne. ceffity to any body, I did not know one person that could affift me, except Navarro, whom I had neglected fo much, fince I turn. ed courtier, that I had not affurance enough to make application to his friendship. I had been obliged to fell all my clothes piecemeal, except those for which I had absolute occasion. I went no more to the eatinghouse, because I had not wherewithal to pay my ordinary. How did I make shift then to fubfift? Every morning, a little bread and wine was brought into our offices for breakfast: this was all that the minister allowed: this was all I ate through the day: and I generally went supperless to bed.

Such was the situation of a man who shone at court, and who was more properly an object of compassion than envy. Nevertheless, I could no longer sustain the weight of my misery; and at length determined to disclose it, with address, to the Duke of Lerma, as soon as an opportunity should offer. Happily for me, I found an occasion at the Escurial*, whither

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by Philip the fecond king of Spain; who in his life time expended no less than \$,270,000 ducats, in finishing and adorning this magnificent

whither the king and the prince repaired, fome days after I had come to this resolution.

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CHAP. VI.

The manner in which Gil Blas informs the Duke of Lerma of his necessity, and that minister's behaviour on the occasion.

7 HILE the king was at the Escurial, he defrayed the expence of every body; fo that there I did not feel where the shoe pinched: I lay in a wardrobe, just by the bed-chamber of the duke; who, one morning, rifing as usual at break of day, made me take some papers and a standish, and follow him into the palace garden. We went and fat down under a tuft of trees, where I put myself, by his order, into the posture of a man writing on the crown of his hat; while he held in his hand a paper, which he pretended to read: fo that, at a distance, we feemed bufy in very ferious affairs, though all the while we talked of nothing but trifles.

For the space of an hour, I had diverted his excellency with all the fallies that my good humour could afford, when two magpies perching on the trees under which we sat, began to chatter in such a noisy manner as attracted our attention. These birds (said the duke) seem to scold one another: I P 2 should

nificent work. Here, too, is a chapel in which are the tombs of all the Spanish monarchs, from Charles V. to the present time.

should be very glad to know the cause of their quarrel." "My lord, (said I) your curiosity puts me in mind of an Indian sa. ble, which I have read in Pilpay, or some other author of that kind." The minister desired to hear it, and I recounted it in these words:

" Heretofore a good monarch reigned in Perfia, whose genius being not quite exten. five enough to govern his kingdom of him. felf, he left that care to his grand visir Atal. muc, a man of fuperior capacity, who fupport. ed the weight of that vast monarchy without stooping, and maintained it in profound peace. He had even the art of making the royal authority loved, as well as feared; and the subjects enjoyed an affectionate father in a vifir, who was faithful to his prince. Atalmuc had, among his fecretaries, a young Cachemirian called Zeangir, whom he loved more than all the others. He took pleasure in his conversation, carried him in his company to the chace, and even disclofed to him his most fecret thoughts. One day, while they hunted together in a wood, the vifit feeing two ravens croaking on a tree, faid to his fecretary, " I wish I knew what these birds are talking of, in their language." "Signior, (answered the Cachemirian) your wish may be accomplished." "How can that be?" (replied Atalmuc.) " A cabalistical dervise, (said Zeangir) taught me the language of birds. If you please,

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please, I will listen to these, and repeat to you verbatim every thing that I shall hear." "The vifir confented; and the Cachemirian approaching the ravens, feemed to lend an attentive ear to their discourse: after which, returning to his master, "Signior, (faid he,) would you believe it? we are the fubject of their conversation." "Impossible! (cried the Persian minister,) what can they fay of us?" " One of them (replied the fecretary) faid, Behold the grand vifir Atalmuc in person, that tutelary eagle, who covers Persia like a nest with his wings, and incesfantly watches for its preservation. relaxation from his painful toils, he hunts in this wood with his faithful Zeangir. How happy is that fecretary in ferving a mafter who has fo much affection for him!" "Softly, (faid the other raven,) foftly; don't too much extol the happiness of that Cachemirian: Atalmuc, 'tis true, converses familiarly with him, honours him with his confidence, and I don't doubt, intends to give him a confiderable post: but, before that happens, Zeangir will die of hunger. That poor devil lodges in a small paultry room, where he is in want of the common necesfaries of life. In a word, he lives in a miferable manner, though no body at court perceives it. The grand vifir never thinks of inquiring into his circumstances; but, content with entertaining favourable fentiments in his behalf, leaves him, in the mean time, a prey to poverty." Here

Here I left off speaking, in order to observe the duke, who asked with a smile, what im. pression the apologue made on the mind of Atalmuc, and if the grand vifir was not of. fended at the prefumption of his fecretary. " No, my lord, (faid I, in great confusion at his question,) the fable fays, that, on the contrary, he loaded him with favours."-"That was lucky, (replied the duke, with a ferious air,) fome ministers would not like to be fo schooled. But (added he, breaking off the discourse, and getting up,) I believe the king will foon be awake, and my duty obliges me to be near him." So faying, he walked hastily towards the palace, without speaking another word, and very ill pleased, as I imagined, with the Indian fable.

I followed him to the very door of his majesty's bed chamber; after which I went and put the papers into the place from whence I had taken them, and then entered the closet where our two copying secretaries were at work; for they were also along with us.—"What is the matter with you, Signior de Santillane? (said they, when they saw me,) you seem very much disturbed! Has any disagreeable accident happened to you?"

I was too much affected with the bad fuccess of my apologue to conceal my grief: I recounted to them what I had said to the duke; and they expressed their sympathy in the sharp affliction with which I was seized. "You have great reason to be grieved, (said one of them;) I wish you may

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be better treated than the fecretary of Cardinal Spinola, who, tired with having received nothing during fifteen months in which he was employed by his eminence, took the liberty, one day, of representing his necessity, and craving some maney for his sublistence." "It is but just (said the minister) that you should be paid. Here, (added he. giving him an order for a thousand ducats,) go and receive that fum from the royal treafury; but remember, at the fame time. that I have no further occasion for your fervice." "The fecretary would have confoled himself for his dismission, had he touched his thousand ducats, and been allowed to feek for business elsewhere; but, just as he went out of the cardinal's house, he was arrested by an alguazil, and conducted to the tower of Segovia, where he has been prisoner a long time."

This touch of history redoubled my fear; I believed myself undone; and becoming inconsolable, began to reproach my own impatience, as if I had not suffered enough. "Alas! (said I,) why did I risk that unlucky sable which has displeased the minister? Perhaps, he was just on the point of extricating me out of my miserable situation—Nay, perhaps I was on the eve of making one of those sudden fortunes which astonish mankind. What riches! what honours have I lost by my own folly! I ought to have considered, that great men don't chuse to be anticipated, but desire that the least

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gratifications they are obliged to give, should be received as their own free grace and favour. It would have been better for me to continue my slender regimen, without complaining to the duke, and even to let my. felf die of hunger, by which means the

blame would have lain on his fide.

If I had even preserved the sparks of hope, my master whom I saw in the afternoon, would have banished them entirely; he was very serious with me, contrary to custom, and scarce spoke at all; a circumstance that threw me into mortal disquiet for the rest of the day; neither did I pass the night in more tranquillity, my sorrow for seeing all my agreeable illusions vanish, and the dread of increasing the number of state prisoners, made me groan and lament my condition till morning.

The next day was the crisis of my fate. The duke ordered me to be called in the morning, and I entered his chamber, trembling like a criminal who is going to receive fentence. "Santillane, (faid he, shewing a paper which he held in his hand,) take this order." I quaked at the word Order, faying to myself, "O heaven! behold Cardinal Spinola! the carriage is ready for Segovia-The terror which feized me was fuch, that I interrupted the minister, and throwing myself at his feet, " My lord, (faid I, all in tears,) I most humbly beg, that your excellency will pardon my prefumption: it was necessity alone that compelled me to disclose my situation."

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The duke, who could not help laughing at my disorder, answered, " Be comforted, Gil Blas, and liften to what I am going to fay-although the discovering thy necessities was a reproach to me, for not having prevented them; I am not at all disobliged, my friend; I am rather angry with myself for having omitted to ask how thou livest. But, to begin with making amends for this inattention, I give thee this order for fifteen hundred ducats, which will be paid upon fight, out of the royal treasury. is not all; I promise thee the same sum annually, and besides, when people of wealth and generofity folicit thy interest, I do not forbid thee to speak in their behalf."

In the extacy occasioned by these words, I kissed the feet of the minister, who having commanded me to rife, continued to discourse with me in a familiar manner. attempted to recal my good humour, but I could not make fuch a fudden transition from grief to joy. I was as much confounded as a wretch who is informed of his pardon in the very minute when he expected his execution. My master ascribed all this agitation to the fear of having incurred his displeasure, though the dread of perpetual imprisonment had no less a share in my discomposure. He confessed, that he had aftested coolness towards me, to see whether or not I should be afflicted at the change; that from this he was convinced of my fincere

cere attachment to his person, for which he loved me the more.

CHAP. VII.

The good use to which he put his fifteen hundred ducats; the first affair in which he intermeddled, and the profit from thence accruing.

THE king, as if he had intended to gra. tify my impatience, returned the very next day to Madrid; upon which, I flew in. stantly to the royal treasury, where I immediately touched the fum contained in my order. I now listened to nothing but my vanity and ambition; I abandoned my miserable room to those secretaries who are still ignorant of the language of birds, and once more hired my fine apartment, which was luckily untenanted. I fent for a famous tailor, who worked for almost all the beaux; he took my measure, and carried me to a shop where he took off five ells of cloth, which (he faid) was barely fufficient to make a fuit for me. Five ells for a fuit of Spanish taste! just heaven!-but, let us spare our censure. Tailors of reputation always use more than others. I then bought fome linen, which I wanted very much, filk stockings, and a beaver, laced with point d'espagne. This being done, I thought it would not look well for me to be without a lacquey, and defired Vincent Forero my landlord, to accommodate me with one of his own recommendation. Most of the strangers who

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who lodged with him, used, on their arrival at Madrid, to take Spanish valets into their fervice, by which means his house was the rendezvous of all the lacqueys out of place. The first that presented himself, was a young fellow of fuch a foft, devout appearance, that I would have nothing to do with him; he looked too much like Ambrose de Lamela. "I don't want (said I to Forrero) a valet of such a religious deportment; I have been already bit by fuch another." Scarce had I dismissed this lacquey, when another came in, of a very sprightly appearance, as impudent as a court page, with fomething roguish in his looks. Pleafed with his out-fide, I put some questions to him, which he answered with spirit. I observed that he was of an intriguing disposition, and looking upon him as a subject pat for my purpose, engaged him immediately. I had no cause to repent of my choice, nay, I perceived, in a very little time, that I had made an admirable acquisition. As the duke had permitted me to speak to him, in favour of people whom I winted to serve, (and I was resolved not to ne flect this permission;) I had occasion for a jackall to discover the game; that is, an industrious pleasant fellow, proper to find out and allure those who had favours to ask This office was quite of the prime minister. the master-piece of Scipio (such was my lacquey's name) who had been in the fervice of Donna Anna de Guevara, nurse to the Vol. III. prince

prince of Spain, where he had exercised

that talent to some purpose.

As foon as he understood my credit, and that I should be glad to use it to the best advantage, he went to work, and that ve. ry day faid to me, "Signior, I have made a pretty good discovery: a young gentle. man of Grenada, called Don Roger de Ra. da, is come to Madrid on an affair of ho. nour, which obliges him to folicit the duke of Lerma's protection, and he is willing to pay well for the favour he shall obtain. I have already spoke with him, and found him defirous of applying to Don Rodrigo de Calderona, whose power he had heard greatly extolled; but I have changed his in. tention, by affuring him, that Calderona fells his good offices at an extravagant rate; whereas you content yourfelf with a moderate gratification for yours, and that you would even employ them gratis were you in a fituation that permitted you to follow your generous and difinterested inclination. In fhort, I fpoke to him in fuch a manner, as that you will fee the gentleman at your levee to-morrow morning." " How! (faid I,) Mr Scipio, you have already done a great deal of work. I perceive that you are no novice in matters of intrigue; and are furprifed that you have not made your. fortune." " That ought not to furprise you; (he replied.) I love to make money circulate, and never hoard up what I get." Don

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Don Roger de Rada actually came to my lodgings, and I received him with politeness mixed with pride. "Signior Cavalier (said I) before I engage to serve you, I must know the affair of honour that brings you to court; for it may be of such a nature, that I dare not speak to the prime minister in your behalf; make, therefore, if you please, a faithful report of it, and be affured, that I will enter warmly into your interests, provided a man of honour may espouse them." "With all my heart, (replied the young Grenadine,) I will sincerely recount my story." At the same time, he related it, as follows.

CHAP. VIII.

The history of Don Roger de Rada.

ON Anastasio de Rada, a Grenadine gentleman, lived happily in the town of Antequera with Donna Estephania his wife, who, together with unblemished virtue, possessed a gentle disposition, and a great share of beauty. If she had a tender affection for her husband, he was also distractedly fond of her, and being naturally addicted to jealoufy, (though he had not the least cause to suspect her fidelity,) was not without disquiet. He was afraid that some secret enemy of his repose made attempts upon his honour; he distrusted all his friends, except Don Huberto de Hordales, who had free access to his house, in quality of Estephania's cousin, and who, in-

deed, was the only man be ought to have

suspected.

Don Huberto actually fell in love with his kinfwoman, and had prefumption enough to declare his passion, without regard to ties of blood, or the particular friendship subsisting between him and Anastasio. The lady being a woman of discretion, instead of making a discovery, which might have been attended with melancholy consequences, reprimanded her relation with gentlemess, represented to him how much he was to blame, in attempting to seduce her and dishonour her husband; and told him very seriously, that he must not statter himself with the hope of success.

This moderation ferved only to inflame the cavalier the more; and imagining that he must push things to extremity with a woman of her character, he began to behave very disrespectfully to her, and one day had the audacity to press her to satisfy his desire. She repulsed him with an air of severity, and threatened to make Don Anastasio punish his rashness. The gallant terrified at this menace, promised to speak no more of his passion, and on the faith of that promise,

Estephania pardoned what was past.

Don Huberto, who was naturally a very wicked man, could not behold his love foill repaid, without conceiving a base desire of being revenged. He knew the jealous temper of Don Anastasio to be susceptible of any impression which he had a mind to give; and

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phania,

he needed no more than this intelligence to form the blackest design that ever entered into the heart of a villain. One evening, while he and this weak husband were walking together, by themselves, he said to him with a melancholy air, " My dear friend, I can no longer live without revealing to you a fecret, which I would have kept for ever from your knowledge, were not your honour dearer to you than your repose; but your delicacy and mine in point of injuries, permits me not to conceal what pafses at your house; prepare to hear a piece of news, which will give you as much forrow as furprife, for I must touch you in the

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" I understand you, (said Don Anastafio, already discomposed) your cousin is unfaithful." "I no longer own her for my cousin, (replied Hordales, with an air of indignation,) I renounce her: for the is unworthy of fuch a husband." "Tis too much to make me languish in this manner, (cried Don Anastasio:) speak: what has Estephania done?" "She has betrayed you, (answered Huberto,) you have a rival, whom the entertains in private: but I know not his name: for the adulterer, by the fayour of a dark night, concealed his person from those who observed his retreat. All I know is, that you are deceived: that I am certain of. The concern which I ought to have in this affair, but too well verifies my report. Since I declare myself against Este-Q 3

phania, I must be well convinced of her in.

fidelity.

"It is in vain, (added he, observing that his discourse had the desired effect,) it is in vain for me to tell you more. I perceive that you don't deserve the ingratitude with which your love is repaid; and that you meditate just vengeance on the guilty. I will not oppose your design. Never examine who the vistim is that you intend to strike; but shew to the whole city, that there is nothing which you cannot sacrifice to your honour."

The traitor thus animated a too credulous husband against an innocent wife, and painted, in fuch lively colours, the infamy with which he would be covered, if he should leave the injury unpunished, that he grew mad with revenge. Don Anastasio having lost his judgment, seemed accuated by the furies, and went home with a refolution to flab his unhappy wife, who was just going to bed when he came in. He constrained himfelf at first, and waited until the servants were withdrawn; then, unrestricted by the fear of heaven's wrath, by the dishonour he was going to reflect upon his family, and even by the natural pity which he ought to have felt for an infant, which his wife had already carried fix months in her womb, he approached the victim, faying, in a furious tone, "Thou must die, wretch! thou hast but a moment to live, and that my generofity allows thee, to fpend in a prayer to heaven, to pardon the outrage thou hast committed

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mitted against me: for I would not have thee lofe thy foul, as thou hast lost thy honour." So faying, he unsheathed his poniard. His action and discourse terrified Estephania, who, falling at his feet, and clasping her hands, faid to him in the utmost astonishment, "What is the matter, Signior! what cause of discontent have I been so unhappy as to give you? Why would you take away the life of your spouse? If you suspect her of

infidelity, indeed you are mistaken."

" No, no! (the jealous husband hastily replied) I am but too well affured of your falsehood: those who informed me are creditable persons. Don Huberto"-" Ah! Signior, (faid she, interrupting him with precipitation) you have reason to distrust Don Huberto. He is less your friend than you imagine: if he has faid any thing to the prejudice of my virtue, do not believe him." " Peace, infamous woman! (answered Don Anastasio) by endeavouring to prejudice me against Hordales, you justify, instead of dissipating my suspicions. You endeavour to render that relation suspected, because he is informed of your misconduct: you want to invalidate his testimony; but that artifice is in vain, and redoubles my defire of punishing your guilt." " My dear husband! (refumed the innocent Estephania, weeping bitterly) distrust your own blind rage: if you follow its emotions, you will commit an action, which it will not be in your power to atone, when once you are convinced

vinced of your injustice. In the name of God, quiet your transports: at least, give yourself time to clear up your suspicions, and do justice to a wife, who has no crime

to reproach herfelf with."

Any other than Anastasio would have been moved with these words, and still more with the affliction of her who pronounced them: but he, cruel man! far from being melted at her diftress, once more bade the lady recommend herself quickly to God, and even lifted up his arm to strike. " Hold, barbarian! (cried she) if thy love for me is entirely extinguished; if the marks of tenderness, which I have lavished upon thee, are effaced from thy remembrance; if my tears cannot divert thee from thy execrable defign; at least, have some regard to thy own blood. Arm not thy frantic hand against an innocent, who has not yet feen the light: thou canst not be its executioner, without offending heaven and earth: as for my part, I forgive thee my death: but be affured, the blood of the babe will cry for vengeance upon fuch a horrible deed."

Howfoever determined Don Anastasio was to pay no attention to what Estephania might say, he could not help being moved by these dreadful images, which her last words presented to his thought. Wherefore, as if he had been assaid that his emotion would betray his resentent, he hastened to take advantage of the fury that remained in his heart, and plun-

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ging his poniard into the right side of his wife, quitted his house immediately, and

fled from Antequera.

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Mean while, the unfortunate lady was fo funned with the blow which she had received, that she lay some minutes on the floor, without any figns of life: afterwards, recovering her spirits, she uttered such plaints and lamentations, as brought an old maidfervant into the room. As foon as this good woman faw her mistress in such a piteous condition, the waked the rest of the domeflics, and even the neighbours with her cries. The chamber was foon filled with people; furgeons were called; they examined the wound, and had good hopes of her recovery. They were not mistaken in their conjecture; for, in a little time, they cured Estephania, who was happily delivered, three months after this cruel adventure, of a fon, Signior Gil Blas, whom you now fee. I am the fruit of that melancholy pregnancy.

Although scandal seldom spares a woman's virtue, it respected that of my mother; and this bloody scene was looked upon in town, as the groundless transport of a jealous husband. My father, 'tis true, was known to be a violent man, very apt to take umbrage without cause. Hordales concluded, that his kinswoman suspected him of having disturbed the mind of Don Anastasio with salse stories; and satisfied with being at least half revenged, left off visiting her. Not to tire you, Sir, I will not enlarge upon the parti-

culars

culars of my education; but only observe, that my mother's principal care was to have me taught to fence; and I accordingly learn. ed that exercise, a long time, in the most ce. lebrated schools of Grenada and Seville. She waited, with impatience, until I was old e. nough to measure my sword with that of Don Huberto, before the informed me of the cause she had to complain of him: then, I being in my eighteenth year, the imparted to me the whole story; not without shed. ding tears in abundance, and appearing affected with the most violent forrow. What impression must a mother, in that condition, make on a fon, who neither wanted courage nor fentiment? I went inftantly, and challenged Hordales to a private place, where, after a pretty obstinate combat, I ran him through the body in three places, and left him breathless on the spot.

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Don Huberto finding himself mortally wounded, fixed his last looks upon me, and said he received the death I had given him, as a just punishment for the crime he had committed against the honour of my mother. He confessed that he had resolved upon her destruction, to be revenged of her scorn; and expired, asking pardon of heaven, Don Anastasio, Estephania, and me. I did not think proper to return, in order to inform my mother est what had happened, I lest that to same; and passing the mountains, repaired to Malaga, where I embarked with the captain of a pri-

vateer, just ready to sail on a cruize. He thought I did not look like one who wanted courage, and gladly consented that I

should join his volunteers.

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We foon found an opportunity of fignalizing ourselves. Near the island of Albouran*, we met a corsair of Mellila, in her return to the coast of Africa, with a Spanish ship richly laden, which she had taken off Carthagena+. We vigourously attacked the African, and made ourselves masters of both ships, in which we found fourscore Christians, whom they were carrying as slaves to Barbary. Then, taking advantage of a favourable wind that sprung up for the coast of Grenada, we arrived, in a little time, at Punta de Helena.

While we asked the slaves, whom we had delivered, the places of their nativity, I put that question to a man of good mein, who seemed to be about fifty years of age. He answered, with a sigh, that he was from Antequera. I felt a strange emotion at his reply, without knowing wherefore; and he perceiving it, was remarkably disturbed in his turn. "I am (said I) your townsman: may I ask the name of your family?"

" Alas

* Albouran, a small island in the Mediterranean, on the coast of the kingdom of Fez. Mellila is a little city, in the same part of Barbary.

[†] Carthagena, or New Carthage, an ancient city, in the kingdom of Murcia, fituated on the coast of the Mediterranean sea. It
was built by a colony of the Carthagenians, and taken by Scipio,
210 years before the birth of Christ. Here it was that great commander gave that admirable proof of his moderation, which hath
been transmitted to posterity in the story of the beautiful captive
whom he so generously restored to her lover.

Alas (he replied) you renew my grief, by desiring me to gratify your curiosity. Eigh. teen years ago I quitted Antequera, where I cannot be remembered without horror: you yourself may, perhaps, have heard of me but too often: my name is Don Anastasio de Rada." " Just heaven! (cried I) can I be. lieve my fenses? What! is this Don Anasta. fio, my own father, whom I fee?" " What is that you fay, young man? (cried he, in his turn, looking at me with furprise) is it posfible that you are the unhappy infant, which was in its mother's womb, when I facrificed her to my fury?" " Yes, my father, (faid I) I am he, whom the virtuous Estephania brought into the world, three months after that fatal night on which you left her weltering in her blood."

Don Anastasio, before I had finished these words, fell upon my neck, clasped me in his arms, and, for a whole quarter of an hour, we did nothing but mingle our fighs and tears. After having yielded to those tender emotions that fuch a meeting could not fail to raise, my father lifted up his eyes, and thanked heaven for having preserved the life of Estephania. But a moment after, as it he had been afraid of giving thanks unseafonably, he asked in what manner the innocence of his wife had been proved? " Signior (faid I) no body but you ever doubted it: her conduct was always irreproachable. I will disabuse you: you mult know, that you was imposed upon by Don

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on to, Huberto." I then recounted the whole of that relation's perfidy, the vengeance I had taken, and the confession he made at his death. My father was not so much pleased with the recovery of his freedom, as with the news I told. In the excess of his joy, he began to embrace me again with tenderness and transport; and could not help expressing his satisfaction with regard to my conduct. "Come, my son, (said he,) let us hasten to Antequera. I burn with impatience, to throw myself at the feet of a wise, whom I have so unworthily treated. Since you have made me acquainted with my own injustice, my heart is torn with remorse!"

I was too eager to bring together persons who were fo dear to me, to retard the happy moment: I quitted the privateer, and with my share of the prize we had taken, bought two mules at Adra, my father being unwilling to expose himself again to the dangers of the fea. He had leifure enough on the road to relate his adventures, which I heard with as greedy attention as that which the prince of Ithaca paid to those of the king his father. In short, after having travelled several days, we gained the foot of a mountain, in the neighbourhood of Antequera, where we halted; and refolving to go home privately, did not enter the town till midnight.

l leave you to guess the surprise of my mother, at the return of a husband whom she thought for ever lost; and the miraculous Vol. III.

manner (if I may be allowed the expression) in which he was restored, became another cause for her astonishment. He asked pardon for his barbarity, with such genuine marks of repentance, that she could not help being affected with them; and, instead of regarding him as an assassion, looked upon him as a man to whom heaven had subjected her will; so sacred is the name of hus-

band to a virtuous woman!

Estephania had been so anxious on my account, that she was overjoyed at my return. But her pleasure was not without allay: the sister of Hordales had begun a criminal process against the murderer of her brother, and caused me to be searched for every where in such a manner, that my mother, knowing how insecure I was at home, suffered great uneasiness, which obliged me to set out that very night for court, where I come, Signior, to solicit my pardon, which I hope to obtain, since you design to speak to the prime minister in my behalf, and to support me with your whole credit."

The valiant son of Don Anastasio here sinished his narration; upon which I said to him, with an air of importance, "Enough, Signior Don Roger, the case seems pardonable: I undertake to communicate your affair to his excellency, and I will venture to promise you his protection." The Grenadine, upon this assurance, launched out into a world of hanks, which would only have entered at one ear and gone out at the

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other, had he not affured me, that whatever fervice I should do him, would be close followed by his acknowledgment. As foon as he touched on that string, I put myself in motion, and that very day recounted his story to the duke, who having permitted me to introduce the cavalier, faid to him, " Don Roger, I am informed of the affair that brought you to court; Santillane has told me every circumstance; make yourself eafy; you have done nothing that is not excuseable; and it is particularly to those gentlemen who revenge their injured honour, that his majesty loves to shew favour. the fake of form, you must go to prison; but be affured, you shall not continue in it long. Your friend Santillane will take care of the rest, and soon procure your enlargement."

Don Roger made a profound bow to the minister, on whose word he surrendered himself. His pardon, by my care, was expedited in a very little time; for, in less than ten days, I sent this new Telemachus home to his Ulysses and Penelope; whereas, had he been without a protestor, he would not, perhaps, have been quit for a whole year's imprisonment. I touched no more than an hundred pistoles for my good offices: so that it was not a great catch. But I was not yet a Calderona, to despise small matters.

CHAP. IX.

Gil Blas finds means to make a confiderable forune in a very short time, and gives himself great airs accordingly.

HIS affair quickened my appetite; and ren pistoles which I gave to Scipio for his right of brokerage, encouraged him to go upon the fcent again. I have already extolled his talents in this way: he might have been justly entitled the Great Scipio. The fecond customer he brought was a printer, who, in despite of common sense, had enriched himself by books of knight-errantry. This honest tradesman had pirated a work belonging to another printer, and his edition was seized. For three hundred ducats he obtained, through my means, a replevy, and escaped a large fine. the minister, properly speaking, had no bufiness with this affair, his excellency, at my request, was so good as to interpose his authority. After the printer, a merchant paffed through my hands, on the following oc-A Portugueze ship had been taken by a corfair of Barbary, and afterwards retaken by a privateer of Cadiz. Two thirds of the loading belonged to a merchant of Lisbon, who having reclaimed it in vain, came to court in quest of a patron, who had credit enough to cause restitution to be made. I interested myself in his behalf, and he got posfession of his effects, in consideration of a prefent

present which he made me, of four hundred

pistoles, for my protection.

Methinks I hear the reader cry in this place, Bravo, Monsieur de Santillane, put hay into your boots; you are in a fine road; push your fortune-Oh! that I will, I warrant you-I fee, if I am not mistaken, my valet coming with a new prize, which he has grappled-Right: it is Scipio-let us hear " Signior, (faid he) allow me to introduce this famous operator to you. wants a patent to fell his medicines, exclufive of all others, during the space of ten years, in all the cities under the dominion of Spain; that is, all persons of his profession shall be prohibited from fettling in the place or places where he refides; and he will pay, as an acknowledgment, two hundred pistoles to any person who will procure for him the said privilege." Isaid to the mountebank, assuming the patron, "Well, friend, your business shall be done." Sure enough, in a very few days, I dispatched him with patents, which entitled him to cheat the people exclusively through all the kingdoms of Spain.

Though my wealth increased, I had obtained of his excellency the four favours I had asked, so easily, that I never hesitated in requesting a fifth; which was the government of the city of Vera, on the confines of Grenada, for a knight of Calatrava*, who R 2 promised

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^{*} Calatrava, a military order of knighthood in Spain, instituted in the year 1158, during the reign of Sancho the third king

promised me a thousand pistoles for the place. The minister laughed to see me so hot on the game: " Egad, Gil Blas, (faid he) you go on at a rare rate: you must be fu. riously inclined to oblige your neighbour. Hark'ye, I shall not stand upon trisles with you; but when you demand governments, and other confiderable favours, you shall, if you please, be contented with one half of the profit, and be accountable for the other to me. You can't imagine, (added he) what expence I am obliged to be at, or how many resources I must have to support the dignity of my post: for, notwithstanding the disinterested appearance I assume, I confess I am not imprudent enough to diforder my domestic affairs. Take your measures accordingly."

My master, by this discourse, banishing all fear of being importunate, or rather encouraging me to return frequently to the charge, I became more greedy of riches than ever; and would have willingly advertised, that all those who wanted favours at court, should apply to me. I went upon one course, Scipio upon another, in quest of people whom we might serve for money. My knight of Calatrava had

of Castile. This society has formerly signalized its zeal and courage in many battles against the Insidels, and is still possessed of sifty-six commanderies, and sixteen priories. The habit of the order is a large white mantle, with a red cross on the left side, powdered with slowers de luce. The knights make a vow of poverty, obedience, and conjugal sidelity; and take an oath to maintain the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin.

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had his government of Vera, for his thoufand pistoles; and I-soon obtained another at the fame price, for a knight of St Iago *. I was not contented with making governors only, I conferred orders of knighthood, and converted fome good plebeians into bad gentlemen, by virtue of excellent letters patent. I was also willing that the clergy should feel my benevolence; I bestowed small benefices, canonships, and some ecclesiastical dignities. As for the bishoprics and archbishoprics, they were all in the gift of Don Rodrigo de Calderona, who likewise appointed magistrates, commanders, and viceroys. plain proof that the great places were no better filled than the small ones; for the people we chose to occupy the posts of which we made fuch an honourable traffic, were not always the best qualified, or most regular. We knew very well, that the wits of Madrid made themselves merry at our expence; but we resembled those misers, who confole themselves for the public scorn, with a fight of their gold.

Isocrates has reason to call intemperance and folly the inteparable companions of wealth. When I found myself master of thirty thousand ducats, and in a condition to get, perhaps, ten times as much, I thought I must

^{*} St Iago, or St James. This is the highest order of knight-hood in Spain, instituted in the twelfth century. They take an oath to defend the pilgrims that visit the tomb of St James, at Compostella, from the insults of the Moors. They bear for arms a sword gules, the handles in form of a cross, powdered with slowers de luce; and their motto is, Sanguine Arabum.

then make a figure worthy of the prime-mi. nister's confident. I hired a whole house. which I furnished in a handsome manner: bought the coach of a notary, who had fet it up through oftentation, and now wanted to get rid of it, by the advice of his baker. I engaged a coachman; and as it is but just to advance old fervants, raifed Scipio to the triple honour of my valet de chambre, fecre. tary, and steward. But what put the finish. ing stroke to my pride, was the minster's allowing my people to wear his livery. This banished all the judgment that remained; and I became as mad as the disciples of Porcius Latro, who, when they had made themselves as pale as their master, by drinking decoctions of cumin, imagined themfelves as learned; and well nigh believed myfelf the Duke of Lerma's relation. I really took it into my head, that I should pass for such, or, perhaps, for one of his bastards: a reflection that gave me infinite pleafure.

Add to this, that, in imitation of his excellency, who kept open table, I resolved to entertain also. For this purpose, I ordered Scipio to look out for a good cook; and he found one, who was, perhaps, comparable to that of Nomentanus *, of dainty memory. I furnished my cellar with delicious wines, and

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Lucius Cassius Nomentanus, a famous epicure, that lived in the Augustan age, and ate up a vast fortune. He is upon honourable record in many places of Horace, for his nice taste in sensuality.

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after having laid in all other kinds of provision, began to receive company. Every evening, fome of the principal clerks of the minister's office, who proudly assume the quality of secretaries of state, came to sup with me. I gave them good cheer, and always fent them home well watered. Scipio, on his fide, (for it was like master like man,) kept table also, in the buttery, where he regaled his acquaintances at my expence. But, exclusive of my regard for that young fellow, I thought, as he contributed to my getting money, he had a right to affift me in spending it. Besides, Hooked upon this profusion like a young man, and did not perceive the consequence. I had another reason also for overlooking it. Benefices and employments never ceased bringing grift to the mill; and feeing my finances daily increase, I thought I had, for once, drove a nail into the wheel of fortune.

There was nothing now wanting to gratify my vanity, but to make Fabricius an eyewitness of my pomp. I did not doubt that he was returned from Andalsiua; and, that I might have the pleasure of surprising him, sent him an anonymous billet, importing, that a Sicilian nobleman, of his acquaintance, expected him to supper, at such a day, hour, and place. Nunnez came at the time appointed, and was amazed to find that I was the foreign nobleman who had invited him to supper. "Yes, friend, (said I to him) this is my house; I have a handsome equi-

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page, a good table, and a strong box besides."

"Is it possible, (cried he, with great vivacity) that I find thee again in such opulence! how happy am I in having recommended thee to Count Galiano! I told thee that he was a generous nobleman, who would soon make thee easy for life. I hou hast, doubtless, (added he) followed the wise advice I gave thee, and given the butler a little more rein. I congratulate thee upon thy conduct; for it is by such prudent measures only, that the stew.

ards in great families become so rich."

I let Fabricius applaud himself as much as he pleased, for having introduced me to the service of Count Galiano: after which, in order to moderate the joy which he felt for having procured me fuch a good post, I related the marks of gratitude with which that nobleman had repaid my fervice: but perceiving that my poet, while I made the detail, fung his recantation within himfelf; I faid to him, " I forgive the Sicilian-between you and me, I have more cause to rejoice than be forry at his behaviour towards me. If the Count had not ufed me ill, I should have followed him to Sicily, where I should now be a servant, in expectation of an uncertain establishment. a word, I should not be consident to the Duke of Lerma." Nunnez was fo ftruck with these last words, that he continued fome minutes, incapable of uttering one fyllable. Then breaking filence, all of a fudden; "Did I understand you aright? (said he)

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he,) what! have you the confidence of the prime minister?" "I share it (I replied) with Don Rodrigo de Calderona, and, in all appearance, I shall make great progress." "Truy, Signior de Santillane, (faid he,) I look upon you with admiration! you are capable of filling all forts of employments. What taents you are master of! you have (to use the expression of our tennis court) the universal tool: that is to fay, you are qualified for every hing. Finally, Signior, (added he,) I am overjoyed at your worship's prosperity." "O the devil! (faid I, interrupting him,) Mr Nunnez, truce with Signior and your worhip: let us banish these terms, and live familiarly together." "Thou art in the right, he replied,) I ought not to look upon thee therwise than usual, although thou art beome rich. I will confess my weakness: I was dazzled when I understood thy happy ate. But that prejudice is over, and I now beold thee again as my old friend Gil Blas."

Our conversation was interrupted by the crival of sour or sive clerks. "Gentlemen, said I to them, presenting Nunnez,) you hall sup with Signior Don Fabricio, who composes verses worthy of King * Numa, and writes in prose like a prodigy." Unuckily, I spoke to people who regarded to little, that our author suffered on count of his profession. Scarce would hey deign to savour him with a look. It

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The obscure verses sung by the Salian priests, in their pro-

was to no purpose that he said witty things, in order to attract their attention: they did not perceive the beauty of his sallies: and he was so much piqued at their want of taste, that he made use of his poetical license, and cunningly withdrawing from the company, disappeared. Our clerks did not perceive his retreat, and sat down to table, without so much as asking what was become of him.

Just as I had done dreffing, next morning, and was going abroad, the poet of the Affu. rias entered my chamber, faying, "I ask par. don (my friend) for having fo abruptly left thy clerks, last night: but truly, I was so much out of my element among them, that I could no longer endure my fituation. A parcel of infolent fellows, with their felf-fufficient starched airs! I can't comprehend how thou, who haft an accuteness of underflanding, can'ft accommodate thyfelf to fuch stupid guests; this very day (added he) I will bring hither tellows of wit and fpirit." 66 I shall be obliged to thee, (answered I,) and will entirely depend upon thy taste in the choice of them." "Thou art in the right, (faid he,) I promise thee superior geniuses, of the most entertaining characters. I will go this instant to a coffee-house where they meet, and bespeak them before they engage themselves elsewhere; for, happy is the man who can have their company at dinner or supper, so much are they admired for their agreeable humour. So

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So faying, he left me, and at supper-time returned with fix authors only, whom he introduced to me one after another, characterizing each as he presented him. To hear him, one would have thought that these wits surpassed those of ancient Greece and Italy; and their works (as he faid) deserved to be engraved in letters of gold. I received those gentlemen very politely, and even affected to load them with civility; for the nation of authors is a little vain-glorious. Though I had not laid my injunctions on Scipio to take care that our table should be sumptuoully furnished, as he knew what fort of people I was to treat that day, he had reinforced our fervices of his own accord. thort, we went to supper in high glee; my poets began to talk of themselves, and were not filent in their own praise. One, with a lofty air, mentioned grandees and ladies of quality who were delighted with his muse; another, finding fault with the choice which a learned academy had made of two members, modeftly observed, that they ought to have chosen him. The discourse of the rest was not a whit lefs arrogant. In the middle of supper they worried me with verse and profe, each, in his turn, repeating a specimen of his own writings; one regaled me with a fonnet; another rehearfed a scene of a tragedy; a third read a criticism upon a comedy; and a fourth endeavouring in his turn to give us an ode of Anacreon tranflated into wretched Spanish verse, was in-VOL. III terrupted

him that he had used an improper term. The author of the translation denied his affertion; and a dispute arose, in which all the wits espoused one side or other; the votes were equal, the disputants grew hot, and proceeded to invectives. The debate still continued; until becoming quite surious, they got up and went by the ears together. Fabricio, Scipio, my coachman, lacqueys, and myself, had all sufficient work in parting them; which when we had accomplished, they went away, as if from a public house, without making the least apology for their impolite behaviour.

Nunnez, upon whose promise I had formed an agreeable idea of this entertainment, remained very much out of countenance at this adventure. "Well, friend, (said I to him,) will you still extol your fellow-guests? Upon my conscience, you have brought hither a villanous set. I will henceforth keep to my clerks; don't talk to me of authors." "I will bring no more such (answered he,) thou hast seen the best of the whole tribe."

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CHAP. X.

The morals of Gil Blas are intirely corrupted at court. He is charged with a commission by the Count de Lemos, and engages in an intrigue with that nobleman.

S foon as I was known to be in favour with the Duke of Lerma, I had a court of my own. Every morning, my anti-chamber was full of people, and I gave audience at my levee. Two kinds of company came thither; one, to buy my interest with the minister for favours; and the other to move me by supplications, to obtain for them what they wanted gratis. The first were fure of being heard and affifted; but with regard to the last, I got rid of them immediately by evalive excuses, or amused them so long, that their patience forfook them. Before I belonged to court I was naturally compassionate and charitable; but I no longer felt that humane weakness, and became as hard as flint. Of consequence, I cured myfelf of my friendships also, and stript myself of all focial affection, as will appear by my behaviour to Joseph Navarro, in an affair I am going to relate.

This Navarro, to whom I owed fo many obligations, and who, in one word, was the first cause of my fortune, came one day to my house; and after having expressed a great deal of friendship for me, as she always did when we met, desired me to ask

of the Duke of Lerma a certain employ. ment for one of his friends; telling me, that the cavalier in whose behalf he solicited was a very amiable young gentleman of great merit, but that he wanted a post for his subsistence: " I don't at all doubt (added Joseph) that kind and obliging as you are, you will be overjoyed at an opportunity of ferving a man of honour in diffres; and I am fure that you will think yourfelf behold. en to me, for giving you this occasion of exerting your generofity." This was plainly telling me, that he expected it for nothing, and though I did not much relish the propofal, I appeared very much disposed to do what he defired. " I am charmed (answered I to Navarro) that I have it in my power to shew my lively gratitude for all the favours which I have received at your hands. Your interesting yourself for any one, is a sufficient inducement for me to serve him; your friend shall have that place you have pitched upon for him, depend upon it; the affair is now no longer yours but mine."

On this assurance, Joseph went away very well satisfied. Nevertheless, the person whom he recommended, did not obtain the post in question. I procured it for another man, in consideration of a thousand ducats, which I put into my strong box, and which I preferred to any acknowledgment I might have expected from the clerk of the kitchen, to whom I said (with an air of mortification) when next

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we met, "Ah! my dear Navarro, you was too late in speaking to me; I was prevented by Calderona, who has given away that same post; and I am quite in despair that I have no better news to entersain you with."

Joseph implicitly believed what I said, and we parted more friends than ever; but I believe he soon discovered the truth, for he never after came to my house; and I was charmed at his absence. For, besides my being burdened by the services he had done me, I thought it did not look well for people of my rank at court, to keep company with butlers.

I have not mentioned the Count de Lemos a good while. Let us now return to that nobleman, whom I fometimes visited. I had carried to him the thousand pistoles, as I formerly observed, and afterwards gave him a thousand more, by order of the duke his uncle, out of the money I had belonging to his excellency. The Count de Lemos had a long conversation with me that day: he told me that he had at last gained his end, and entirely possessed the good graces of the prince of Spain, whose fole confident he was: he then gave me charge of a very honourable commission which he had already prepared for me. "Friend Santillane, (faid he) now is the time to be doing: spare nothing to discover some young beauty, who should be worthy to amuse that gallant prince. You don't want wit, and I need fay no more; go, run, fearch, and when you have made a lucky discovery, come and impart

impart it to me." I promised to neglect not thing, in acquitting myself handsomely of this employment, which must not be very difficult to exercise, since so many people

live by the same profession.

I had not been much used to these kinds of inquiry; but not doubting that Scipio was an adept in the art, I called for him when I came home, and faid to him in private, "Child, I am going to entrust thee with a great fecret. Dost thou know, that in the midst of fortune's favours I find I want fomething?"-" I can eafily guess what that is, (faid he, interrupting me before I could proceed,) you want an agreeable nymph to unbend and exhilarate your spirits; and truly it is aftonishing, that you should be without one in the prime of your age, when grave grey-beards cannot dispense with such recreation."-"I admire thy penetration, (answered I with a fmile;) yes, a mistress I want, and defire to have one of thy recommending. But I must warn thee before-hand, that I am very delicate in these matters. I expect a lady of beauty and good morals." "What you require (replied Scipio,) is not eafily found; but, however, we live, thank God, in a city that affords fome of all forts, and I hope I shall foon be able to fit you to a hair."

Sure enough, in three days, he faid, "I have discovered a treasure; a young lady, whose name is Catalina, of a good family, and ravishing beauty; she lives under the tuition of her aunt, in a little house, where they sub-

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fift in an honourable manner on their fortune. which is but small; they are served by a chamber-maid of myacquaintance, who has affured me, that tho' their door is shut to every body at prefent, it would be opened to a rich and liberal gallant, provided he was willing to avoid fcandal, by going in at night, without any shew. Whereupon I described you as a cavalier who deferved to find the door unlatched; and defired the maid to propose you to the ladies. She has promifed to do fo, and inform me of their answer to-morrow morning, at a certain place." "That's well, (I replied,) but I am afraid the chamber-maid imposes upon thee." "No, no, (faid he) I am not fo easily perfuaded; I have already interrogated the neighbours, and conclude from what they fay, that Signiora Catalina is a Danæ on whom you may descend, like another Jupiter, in a shower of gold." Prejudiced as I was against intrigues of this kind, I engaged in it for once; and as the chamber-maid came next day, and told Scipio, that if I pleased I might be introduced that very evening to her mistress, I stole thither between eleven and twelve. The maid receiving me in the dark, took me by the hand, and led me into a pretty handsome hall, where I found the ladies richly dreffed, and feated on fattin couches. As foon as they perceived me, they got up, and faluted me in fuch anoble manner, that I took them for perfons of quality. The aunt, (whose name was Signiora Mencia) tho' still agreeable, did not attract

attract my attention, which was entirely engroffed by the niece, who feemed a goddefs. To examine her minutely, however, she could not be called a perfect beauty; but she had such graces, together with a tempting luscious air, as hindered the eye to perceive her defects.

Accordingly, I was diffurbed at fight of her. I forgot that I came thither to perform the office of procurer; spoke in my own favour, and expressed myself like a man inspired by the most violent passion. The young lady, in whom I found three times more wit than she really had, (so courteous did she feem,) quite enchanted me by her answers; and I began to lose the government of myfelf, when her aunt, in order to moderate my transports, addressed me in this manner: "Signior de Santillane, I must be free with On account of the character which I heard of your worship, I have permitted you to vifit me, without enhancing the price of the favour, by standing on ceremony; but don't imagine yourfelf the nearer your point for that reason. I have hitherto brought up my niece in retirement, and you are, (as I may fay) the first cavalier to whose eyes she has been exposed. If you deem her worthy to be your wife, I shall be overjoyed at her good fortune. Consider, therefore, if the will fuit you at that price; for you cannot have her at a cheaper rate."

This well-aimed shot frighted away Cupid, who was just going to let sly an arrow at me. To speak without metaphor, a marriage so

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bluntly proposed, made me recollect myself. I became again all of a fudden the faithful agent of the Count de Lemos, and changing my tone, replied to Signiora Mencia, "Madam, I am pleased with your frankness which lintend to imitate. Whatever figure I make at court, I am not worthy of the incomparable Catalina, but have in view for her a much more splendid fate: In short, I design her for the prince of Spain." "Your refusal of my niece (replied the aunt, coldly,) was disobliging enough: there was no occasion to accompany it with a piece of raillery." "I don't rally indeed, Madam, (cried I,) nothing is more ferious: I have orders to find out a lady who deferves to be honoured with the private visits of the prince of Spain; I find fuch a one in your house, and mark it for the scene accordingly."

Signiora Mencia was aftonished at these words, which I perceived did not much difplease her: nevertheless, believing that she ought to affect referve, she answered in this manner: " If I was disposed to credit literally what you fay, you must know that I am not of such a character, as to rejoice in the infamous honour of feeing my niece mistress to a prince. My virtue disapproves."-" What a faint you are with your virtue! (faid I, interrupting her,) you talk like one bred among filly citizens. Sure you joke, in pretending to confider things in a moral point of view; that would be stripping them of all their beauty; they must be surveyed with a carnal eye. Behold

hold the heir apparent of Spain at the feet of the happy Catalina, adoring and loading her with prefents; and remember, that from her perhaps will fpring a hero, who will render his mother's name immortal as his own."

Altho' the aunt would have gladly embra. ced my proposal, she feigned herself irreso. lute about the matter; and Catalina, who wished the prince already in her chains, affec. ted great indifference; fo that I was obliged to invest the place a-new, until at length. Signiora Mencia feeing me repulfed, and ready to raise the siege, beat the chamade, and we agreed upon a capitulation, which contained the two following articles.-Imprimis, If the prince of Spain, on the report that I shall make of Catalina's charms, shall be inflamed, and determine to honour her with a nocturnal visit, I shall take care to apprife the ladies of the night that shall be chosen for that purpose.—Item, The prince shall not visit the said ladies but as an ordinary gallant, with no other attendants than me and his Mercury in chief.

After this convention, the aunt and niece shewed me all manner of friendship, and assumed a familiarity of behaviour, in confequence of which, I ventured some hugs, which were not very ill received; and when we parted, they embraced me of their own accord, and loaded me with earesses. It is really wonderful to see with what facility in intimacy is contrasted between the couriers of gallantry and the women who want

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their service. Had people observed me leave this house with such marks of favour, they might have faid with fome appearance of inflice, that I was much happier than I actually found myself. The Count de Lemos was overjoyed, when I let him know that I had made fuch a discovery as he defired. I moke of Catalina in such a manner as made him long to fee her. I carried him to her lodgings next night, and he owned that I had been very fuccessful. He told the ladies, he did not at all doubt that the prince would be perfectly well fatisfied with the mistress which I had chosen for him, and that the on her part would have cause to be contented with fuch a lover; that the young prince was full of generofity and sweetness of temper: in short, he affured them, that he would bring him to their house in a few days, as they defired he should come, that is, without noise or attendance. This nobleman afterwards took his leave of them. and I withdrew in his company. We got back to his equipage, in which we had come thither, and which waited for us at the end of the street: he sat me down at my own house, charging me to inform his uncle next day of this new-started adventure, and to defire he would fend him a thousand pistoles to ensure its success.

I did not fail to give the duke of Lerma an exact account of what had passed: concealing only one circumstance. I did not speak a syllable of Scipio, but took to myself the

honour

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honour of the discovery, according to the practice of those who live among the great.

By these means I acquired a great many compliments. " Mr Gil Blas, (faid the mi. nister to me, with an air of raillery,) I am ravished to find, that, with your other ta. lents, you likewise possess that of discove. ring obliging beauties; when I have occafion for one of that class, you will give me leave to apply to you." "My lord, (I replied in the fame tone,) I thank your grace for intending me the preference; but give me leave to fay, that I should be scrupulous in ferving your excellency in that manner. Signior Rodrigo has been fo long in posses. fion of that employment, that it would be unjust in me to deprive him of it." The duke fmiled at my answer, then changing the discourse, asked if his nephew did not want money for his adventure? "Pardon me, (said I,) he begs you will fend him a thousand pistoles." "Very well, (replied the minister,) carry them to him, bid him fpare nothing, but approve of whatever expence the prince shall propose."

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CHAP. XI.

The private visit and presents which the prince of Spain made to Catalina.

Went that instant with five hundred double pistoles to the count de Lemos, who told me, "You could not come in better season. I have spoke to the prince: he has bit at the hook

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hook, and burns with impatience to fee Ca-This very night he intends to flip privately out of the palace, in order to visit her. It is a thing determined, and our meafures are taken accordingly. Inform the ladies of his refolution, and give them that money which you have brought; for it is right to let them fee that he is no ordinary loves whom they are to receive: besides, the bounty of princes ought to precede their intrigues. As you will accompany him, together with me, (added he) be fure of being at his couchee this evening. Your coach also (for I think it is proper we should use it) must wait for us near the palace about midnight.

I immediately repaired to the house, but did not fee Catalina, who (they told me) was a-bed; fo that I could only speak with Signiora Mencia, to whom I faid, " Madam, pray excuse me for appearing in your house by day, but it is not in my power to do otherwise; for I must give you notice, that the prince of Spain will be here this night, and here (added I, putting the bag of money in her hand) is an offering which he fends to the temple of Cytherea, to render the divinities of the place propitious. fee I have not engaged you in a bad affair." " I am very much obliged to you, (she replied) but tell me, Signior de Santillane, does the prince love music?" " He loves it (answered I) to distraction; nothing can enteirtain him so much as a fire voice, accom-

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panied by a lute delicately touched." "So much the better! (cried she, in a transport of joy) you give me infinite pleasure in telling me this; for my niece has the pipe of a nightingale, and plays upon the lute to admiration; she likewise dances perfectly well." "Heavens! (cried I in my turn) what perfections, my good aunt! so many are not necessary to make a girl's fortune; one of these talents is sufficient for the purpose."

Having thus paved the way, I waited for the hour of the prince's couchee; then giving orders to my coachman, I rejoined the Count de Lemos, who told me that the prince, to get rid of his company the fooner, would feign a flight indisposition, and even go to bed, the better to persuade them of his being sick; but that he would rise again in an hour, and, by a back-door, gain a private

stair that led into the court-yard.

When he had informed me of what they had concerted together, he posted me in a place through which he assured me they would pass; and there I danced attendance so long, that I began to think our gallant had taken another road, or lost his desire of seeing Catalina, as if princes usually drop these fort of whims before they have satisfied them. In short, I imagined they had forgot me altogther, when two men accosted me, whom having discerned to be those I expected, I conducted them to my coach, in which they seated themselves, while I got upon the coach-box to direct the driver, whom I ordered to stop about sifty vards

yards from the house. I then handed the prince and his companion out of the coach, and we walked towards the place for which we were bound. The gate opened at our approach,

and thut again as foon as we got in.

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At first we found ourselves in the same darkness in which I had been introduced: though by way of diffinction there was a small lamp fixed on the wall, the light of which was fo dim, that we could only perceive it, without being lighted by its rays. All this ferved only to make the adventure more agreeable to our hero, who was fenfibly struck at the fight of the ladies, who received him in a hall, where the lustre of a great number of candles made amends for the darkness that reigned in the court. The aunt and niece were in a gay dishabille, so artfully disposed, that nobody could look upon them with impunity. Our prince would have been very well fatisfied with Signiora Mencia, if there had been no other for him to chuse; but the charms of young Catalina, as they deferved, had the prefe-"Well, my prince, (faid the count de Lemos,) was it possible for us to procure your highness the pleasure of seeing two ladies more handsome than these?" " I am ravished with them both! (replied the prince,) and I should never carry off my heart; for the aunt could not miss of it, if it was possible for the niece to fail."

After this compliment, so agreeable to an aunt, he said a thousand fond things to Cata-

lina, who answered with great wit and spirit. As those honourable people who perform the part that I acted on this occasion, are permit. ted to join in the conversation of lovers, provided it be with the intention of adding fuel to the fire; I told the gallant, that his nymph fung and played upon the lute to admiration. He was overjoyed to hear that she was mistress of these talents, and entreated her to entertain him with a specimen. She complied with a good grace, took up a lute ready tuned, play. ed some tender airs, and sung in such an af. feeling manner, that the prince dropt down at her feet, in a transport of love and pleasure. But let us finish this picture, and only observe, that during this fweet intoxication, in which the heir of the Spanish monarchy was plunged, the hours stole away like minutes, and we were obliged to tear him from that dangerous house, because of the day's approach. We the gentlemen undertakers carried him back to his apartment with great dispatch, and then went to our different homes, as well fatisfied in having fitted him with a she-adventurer, as if we had transacted his marriage with a princefs.

Next morning I recounted this adventure to the duke of Lerma, who defired to be informed of every particular; and just as I had finished my narration, the count de Lemos came in, and said, "The prince of Spain is so much ingrossed by Catalina, and has conceived such a passion for her, that he proposes to visit her often, and attach himself to her alone.

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He wanted to fend to her this day jewels to the amount of two thousand pistoles, but not having a penny in his purse, he applied to me. " My dear Lemos (faid he) you must find me that fum immediately. I know very well that I incommode, nay exhaust you, but my heart retains the obligation; and if ever I find myself in a condition to exert my gratitude, otherwise than in thought, for all your friendship, you shall not repent for having laid me under an obligation." " My prince (faid I, leaving him that inflant) I have friends and credit, and will employ them both to accommodate you with what you want."

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" It is not difficult to fatisfy his demand (said the duke to his nephew.) Santillane, go fetch the money: Or, if you please, he will purchase the jewels, for he is a perfect connoisseur in stones, especially rubies. not this true, Gil Blas?" (added he, looking at me with a fatirical smile.) "Your grace is very fevere, (I replied) I fee that you want to make Monsieur the Count merry at my expence." This happened accord-The nephew asked what mystery there was in his words. " Nothing (anfwered the duke, laughing) only Santillane one day thought proper to exchange a diamond for a ruby, and afterwards found that he had gained neither honour nor profit by the bargain."

I should have thought myself easily quit, if the minister had said no more of the matter; but he took the trouble to relate the trick that Camilla and Don Raphael played upon me in the hired lodging, and to enlarge particularly on those circumstances which chagrined me most. His excellency, after having enjoyed his joke, ordered me to accompany the Count de Lemos, who carried me to a jeweller's house, where we chose jewels, which we shewed to the prince for his approbation; and which being asterwards entrusted to me, in order to be presented to Catalina, I went home for two thousand pistoles of the duke's money, with which I paid the merchant.

It is a question not to be asked, if I was kindly received next night by the ladies, when I exhibited the prefents of my embaffy, confifting of an handsome ring designed for the aunt, and a pair of ear-rings for the Charmed with these marks of the prince's love and generofity, they began to prattle like two goffips, and thanked me for having procured for them fuch a valuable They forgot themselves in acquaintance. the excess of their joy, and some words escaped them, which made me suspect that I had introduced a mere gipfie to our great monarch's fon; but that I might know precifely whether or not I had performed this fine master-piece, I went home, resolved to come to an explanation with Scipio.

CHAP XII.

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Catalina's real character. The perplexity and uneafiness of Gil Blas. The precaution he was obliged to take for his own quiet.

JUST as I entered my own house, I heard a great noise; and enquiring into the cause, was told, Scipio that evening treated half-a-dozen of his friends, who sung full throat, and frequently broke out in loud sits of laughter; so that assuredly this repast could not be properly stiled the banquet of the seven wise men.

The master of the feast, advertised of my arrival, faid to his company, " Gentlemen, 'tis only my mafter come home: be not diflurbed, but continue your mirth: I will go and speak two words to him, and rejoin you in a twinkling." So faying, he came to my apartment. "What a hubbub is this? (faid I) what fort of people are those you entertain below? Are they poets?" " No indeed, Sir, if you please, (he replied) it were pity to beflow your wine on fuch company. I make a better use of it. There is among my guests a very rich young fellow, who wants for his money an employment by your interest; and for him alone I give this entertainment: at every draught he drinks, I raise the gratification you are to receive ten pistoles, and will make him drink till day." " If that be the case, (I replied) go back to thy friends don't fpare the wine in my cellar."

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I did not think this a proper feafon to talk with him about Catalina; but next morning when I got up I spoke to him in this manner: "Friend Scipio, thou knowest how we live together; I treat thee more like a comrade than a domestic; and of consequence thou wilt be to blame in deceiving me as a master. Let us then lay afide all referve with one a. nother. I will tell thee fomething that will furprise thee, and thou shalt disclose to me thy real fentiments of those two women with whom thou hast made me acquainted. Between thee and me, I suspect them to be two artful puffes, cunning in proportion to the simplicity which they af. fect. If my opinion does them justice, the prince of Spain has no great cause to be well pleased with me; for I confess it was for him that I wanted a mistress. I accordingly carried him to Catalina's house, and he is become passionately fond of her."-"Signior, (answered Scipio,) I am too well used by you, to be wanting in fincerity with my master. I had yesterday a private conversation with the maid of the two princeffes, and she related their history, which to me feemed very diverting. You shall hear it in two words.

Catalina is daughter to a poor gentleman of Arragon; and finding herself at the age of fifteen an orphan, as handsome as poor, listened to an old commander, who conducted her to Toledo, where he died in fix months, after having

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having ferved as a parent rather than an husband to her. She secured his fortune, confifting of some moveables and three hundred pistoles in ready money, then joined herself to Signiora Mencia, who was still in fashion, though already in the wane. These two good friends lived together, and began to behave fo as to attract the notice of juflice: at which the ladies being difgusted, haftily abandoned Toledo through vexation, and settled in Madrid, where they have lived about two years, without visiting any person in the neighbourhood. But the best circumstance of the story is this, they have hired two fmall houses, separated only by a wall, having in the cellar a stair of communication from the one to the other. Signiora Mencia lives with a young maid-fervant in one of these houses, and the commander's widow possesses the other, with an old duenna who passes for her grandmother; so that our Arragonian is fometimes a niece brought up by her aunt, and fometimes a pupil under the wings of her grandame. When she acts the niece, she is called Catalina, and when she plays the grand child her name is Sirena."

At the name of Sirena, I grew pale; and interrupting Scipio, faid, "What do I hear! alas! I am afraid that this curfed Arragonian is no other than the mistress of Calderona." "Truly, (he replied,) it is the same. I thought this piece of news would

would have given you pleafure." "Thou art very much mistaken, (answered I) I have more cause to be forry than rejoiced at it; doft thou not fee the confequences?" "No. in faith, (refumed Scipio,) what mischief can it produce? you are not fure that Don Rodrigo will discover what passes; and if you are afraid of his getting information, you have nothing to do but preposses the minister in your favour, by telling him candidly the whole affair. He will fee your fincerity; and if, after this, Calderona should attempt to do you an ill office with his excellency, he will perceive that his whole defign is to injure you out of a spirit of revenge."

Scipio by this discourse banished my fear; and, resolved to follow his advice, I informed the Duke of Lerma of the discovery I had made. I even affected to tell it with a melancholy air, in order to perfuade him of my being mortified for having innocently introduced Don Rodrigo's mistress to the prince. But the minister, far from pitying his favourite, laughed at the adventure, and bid me go on in my old way, faying, that after all it was glorious for Calderona to love the fame lady who had captivated the prince of Spain, and to be as well received by her as his Highness. I imparted it also to the Count de Lemos, who assured me of his protection, in case the first secretary should discover the intrigue, and attempt to ruin me with his grace.

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Imagining that by this precaution I had delivered the bark of my fortune from the dangerous shelves that environed it, my fear vanished. I still accompanied the prince to the house of Catalina, alias the fair Sirena, who was artful enough to invent stratagems to keep Don Rodrigo from her embraces, and to defraud him of those nights which she was obliged to bestow on his illustrious rival.

CHAP. XIII.

Gil Blas continues to act the man of consequence. Hears news of his family, which makes but small impression upon him, and quarrels with Fabricius.

I Have already observed, that in the mornling my anti-chamber was usually crowded with people who came to make proposals, but I would not receive them viva voce; and, according to the custom at court, or rather with a view of exhibiting my own importance, I faid to each folicitor, "Give in a memorial." I was fo much used to this, that one day I answered in these words to my landlord, who came to put me in mind of a year's rent being due. As for my butcher and baker, they faved me the trouble of asking their memorials, which were always punctually delivered every month. Scipio, who imitated me fo closely, that the copy might be faid to come very near the original, behaved in the fame manner

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manner to those who applied for his interest with me. I was guilty of another ridiculous piece of vanity, which I don't in. tend to excuse. I was foolish enough to talk of the grandees, as if I had been a man in their sphere. If (for example) I had occasion to mention the duke of Alva, or the duke of Medina Sidonia, I called them without ceremony, " Alva, and Medina Sidonia." In a word, I became fo vain and haughty, that I was no longer my father's fon. Alas! poor duenna and usher, I did not fo much as enquire whether you were happy or miserable in the Asturies! I did not even think of you! The court is like the river Lethe, in making us forget our parents and friends, when they are under misfortunes.

I no longer, therefore, remembered my family, when one morning a young man came to my house, and desiring to speak with me in private, I carried him into my closet, where, without offering him a chair, because he seemed to be a plebeian, I asked what he wanted with me? "How! Signior Gil Blas, (faid he,) don't you remember me?" In vain I considered him attentively: I was obliged to answer, that his features were entirely unknown. "1 am (he replied) one of your old schoolfellows, native of Oviedo, and fon of Bertrand Muscada the grocer, your uncle the canon's neighbour. I remember you very well well; we have played together a thousand

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"I have (said I) but a confused idea of the amusements of my infancy: the business in which I have been engaged since that time, has effaced them from my memory."
"I am come (he resumed) to Madrid, to settle accounts with my father's correspondent; and I heard it said that you was on a good footing at court, and already as rich as a Jew. I congratulate you on your good fortune; and will, at my return into the country, overwhelm your family with joy, by telling them such an agreeable piece of news."

I could not, in common decency, forbear asking in what situation he had left my father, mother, and uncle: but this piece of duty I performed so coldly, that the grocer had no great reason to admire the force of blood. He seemed shocked at my indifference for those who ought to have been so dear to me; and being a plain vulgar young fellow, faid bluntly, " I thought you had more tenderness and sensibility for your relations. How coldly do you enquire into their circumstances! Know, that your father and mother are still at service; and the good canon Gil Peres, burdened with old age and infirmities, draws near his end. People ought to have some natural affection; and fince you are in a condition to affift your parents, I advise you, as a friend, to fend VOL. III.

^{*} Blind-Man's buff.

fend two hundred pistoles yearly for their fupport: by which means you will make their life easy and happy, without any inconvenience to yourfelf." Inflead of being moved by the picture which he drew of my family, I was difgusted at the liberty which he took in advising me, without being defired fo to do. With a little more address, perhaps, he might have perfuaded me; but his freedom had a contrary effect. He perceived my displeasure by my silence; and continuing his exhortation with more malice than charity, made me lose my patience entirely. "Oh, this is too much! (cried I in a paffion,) go, Mr Muscada, and med-dle with your own concerns: it becomes you well, indeed, to prescribe to me; I know my duty, on this occasion, better than you can teach me." So faying, I pushed the grocer out of my closet, and fent him back to fell pepper and cloves at Oviedo. What he faid, however, did not fail of having some effect: I reproached myfelf with being an unnatural fon, and was melted accordingly. I recalled the care they had taken of my infancy and education: I confidered the duty I owed to my parents; and my reflections were attended with fome transports of acknowledgment, which, however, came to nothing: they were foon stifled by my ingratitude, and fucceeded by profound oblivion. There are many parents who have children of the same stamp. The

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The avarice and ambition with which I was possessed, entirely changed my disposition. I lost all my gaiety, became absent and thoughtful; in a word, a miserable animal. Fabricio, feeing me altogether bent on facrificing to fortune, and very much detached from him, came but feldom to my house, where one day he could not help faying, " Truly, Gil Blas, thou art grown out of my knowledge: before thy coming to court, thou wast always easy and tranquil; at prefent, thou art inceffantly agitated with project after project to enrich thyself; and the more wealth thou hast got, the more wouldst thou amass. Besides, let me tell thee, thou no longer treatest me with that effusion of the heart, and freedom of behaviour, which are the foul of friendship; on the contrary, thou wrappest thyself up, and concealest from me thy secret views: nay, I can perceive constraint in all thy civilities towards me: in fhort, Gil Blas is no longer the same Gil Blas whom I formerly knew."

"You joke sure, (said I, with an air of indifference,) I can't perceive any change in myself." "Thy own eyes are no judges, (answered he) they are bewitched: believe me, thy metamorphosis is but too true. Speak sincerely, my friend, Do thou and I live together as formerly? When I used to knock at thy door in the morning, thou camest in person to open it, very often half assep; and I entered thy chamber without

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ceremony.

ceremony. Now, behold the difference! Thou art attended by half-a-fcore of lacqueys.—I am obliged to wait in thy antichamber, and fend in my name before I can speak with thee: then, how am I received? with a forced politeness, and air of importance: so that my visits seem tedious and tiresome. Dost thou think such a reception can be agreeable to one who has lived with thee on the footing of a comrade? No, Santillane; no, I can't put up with it. Farewell. Let us part friends, and get rid of one another: thou of one who censures thy behaviour, and I of a rich upstart who has

forgot himself."

I felt myself more irritated than reclaimed by his reproaches, and let him go, without making the least effort to detain him. In my opinion, at that time, the friendship of a poet was not of fuch value, as that I should be afflicted at the loss of it: I found abundance of confolation in the acquaintance of fome small officers of the king, to whom of late I was strictly connected by a similitude of diposition. The greatest part of these new companions were people who fprung I know not whence, and arrived at their posts merely by the happy influence of their stars. They had already made their fortunes; and the wretches, ascribing to their own merit the wealth which had been heaped upon them by the bounty of the King, forgot themselves as well as I did. We looked upon ourselves as

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very respectful personages. O fortune! how are thy favours usually dispensed! The stoic Epictetus was certainly in the right, when he compared thee to a young lady of fashion, who prostitutes herself to the embraces of footmen.

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THE END OF THE EIGHTH BOOK.

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ADVENTURES

OF

GIL BLAS OF SANTILLANE.

BOOK IX.

CHAP. I.

Scipio advises Gil Blas to marry, proposes the daughter of a rich and noted goldsmith for his wife: the steps which were taken in consequence of this advice.

NE evening, after the company which had supped with me was gone, seeing myself alone with Scipio, I asked what he had done that day! "A master-piece, (he replied,) I intend to have you married to the only daughter of a goldsmith of my acquaintance." "The daughter of a goldsmith! (cried I, with an air of disdain,) Hast thou lost thy senses! How can'ft thou propose a wise from the city? One who has certainly merit, and

and is on a fure footing at court, ought to entertain more 'elevated views, methinks." "How, Sir? (replied Scipio,) fure you are not in earnest: consider that the male alone ennobles; and be not more delicate than a thoufand noblemen, whose names I can mention. Do you know that the heirefs in question is worth an hundred thousand ducats? Is not this a fine morfel of plate?" When I heard him talk of fuch a round fum, I became more trastable. " I yield, (faid I to my fecretary,) the dowry determines me: When shall I touch it?" "Softly, Sir, (he replied,) a little patience: I must first communicate the proposal to the father, and obtain his confent." "Good! (said I, laughing heartily;) are you still thereabouts? I find the marriage is far advanced." " Farther than you imagine, (answered he,) I want only an hour's conversation with the goldsmith; and will anfwer for his consent. But before we proceed, let us come to a composition, if you Suppose I procure for you those hundred thousand ducats, how many will fall to my share?" "Twenty thousand" (I replied.) " Heaven be praised, (said he,) I limit thy acknowledgment to ten thousand: for once, you are more generous than I. To-morrow I will fet this negociation on foot; and you may depend upon its fuccess: otherwise, I am but an ass." In effect, two days after, he faid, "I have spoke to Signior Gabriel Salero the goldfmith; and have

have extolled your credit and your merit fo much, that he listened to the proposal I made, of accepting you for a fon-in-law: and you shall have his daughter with an hundred thousand ducats, provided you can make it plainly appear, that you are in favour with the minister." " If that be the case, (answered I to Scipio,) I shall be married very foon: but, a-propos, Hast thou feen the girl? Is she handsome?" fo handsome as the dowry, (faid he;) between you and me, this rich heiress is not a very beautiful creature: but, luckily, that you don't mind." "No, faith, my child! (faid I,) we courtiers only marry for the fake of marrying, and look for beauty no where but in the wives of our friends. If it happens to center in our own, we take so little notice of it, that it is but just in them to punish us for our neglect."

"This is not all, (refumed Scipio,) Signior Gabriel invites you to supper to-night; and we have agreed, that you shall not talk of marriage. There will be several merchants of his acquaintance present at the entertainment, where you shall appear only a simple guest: and to-morrow he will sup with you in the same manner. By this you may see that he wants to study your temper, before he proceeds: so that you must be on your guard before him." "Zooks! (said I, with an air of considence,) let him examine me as narrowly as he pleases; I shall lose nothing by his same in a starting in the lose nothing by his same in a starting in the lose nothing by his same in a starting in the lose nothing by his same in a starting in the lose nothing by his same in a starting in the lose nothing by his same in a starting in the lose nothing by his same in a starting in the lose nothing by his same in a starting in the lose nothing by his same in the lose nothing his same in the lose nothing by his same in the lose nothing his same in the lose not

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All this was punctually executed: I repaired to the house of the goldsmith, who received me as familiarly as if we had already visited one another several times. He was an honest citizen, polite * hasta porfar, as the saying is. He introduced me to Signiora Eugenia his wife, and young Gabriela his daughter, to whom I paid abundance of compliments, without infringing the reaty. I said a great many things, in very specious words, according to the custom of courtiers.

Gabriela (no disparagement to my secretary) appeared not at all difagreeable; whether on account of her being richly dreffed, or that I looked upon her through the dowry, I know not. What a fine house did Signior Gabriel poffess! I believe there was more filver in it than in all the mines of Peru: that metal presented itself to the view in all corners, under a thousand different Every room, and that in particular where we supped, was a perfect treasure. What a noble fpectacle was this for the eyes of a fon-in-law! The old man, that he might do the greater honour to his entertainment, had affembled five or fix merchants, persons equally grave and tedious: they spoke of nothing but commerce; and their discourse might have been called a conference of factors, rather than the conversation of friends at fupper.

Next night, I treated our goldsmith in my turn; and as it was not in my power to daz-

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zle him with plate, had recourse to an illufion of a different kind. I invited to supper those of my friends who made the best figure at court, and whom I knew to be ambitious fellows, who fet no bounds to their defires. These people talked of nothing but pomp, of splendid and lucrative posts to which they aspired; and this had its effect: the citizen Gabriel, confounded by their grand ideas, found himself, in spite of his wealth, a man mortal in comparison of these gentle. As for my own part, affecting the man of moderation, I said I would be contented with a middling fortune; twenty thousand ducats a year, or so. Upon which, these greedy hunters of honour and riches cried, I was in the wrong; and that a man who (like me) was beloved by the prime minister, ought not to restrict himself to such a trifle. The father-in-law loft not a fyllable of what was faid, and I thought I observed him very well fatisfied when he retired.

Scipio did not fail to visit him next morning, and asked if he was pleased with my behaviour: "I am charmed with it! (replied the citizen) the young man has won my heart. But, Signior Scipio, (added he) I conjure you, by our old acquaintance, to speak sincerely. We have all our different soibles, as you know; tell me that of Signior de Santillane: Is he a gamester? Is he a rake? What is his vicious inclination? Pray don't conceal it." "You affront me, Signior Gabriel, by asking such a question,

a question, (replied the mediator,) I am not so much in my master's interest as in your's. If he had any bad quality capable of making your daughter unhappy, do you think I would have proposed him to you for a son-in-law? No, faith! I am too much your humble servant. But, between you and me, I know no other fault in him, but that of having no sault. He is too modest for a young man. "So much the better, (cried the goldsmith) I am glad of it. Go, friend, assure him that he shall have my daughter, whom I would bestow upon him, even if he was not belo-

ved by the minister."

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My fecretary had no fooner informed me of this conversation, than I hastened to Salero's house, to thank him for his condescension. He had already declared his pleafure to his wife and daughter, who gave me to understand, by their behaviour towards me, that they fubmitted to his will without reluctance. I carried my father-inlaw, and presented him to the Duke of Lerma, to whom I had imparted the affair the preceding evening. His excellency received him very courteously, and assured him, that he was very glad he had chosen for a fonin-law a man for whom he had fo much regard, and whom he intended to advance. He then enlarged upon my good qualities, and, in short, spoke so well of me, that honest Gabriel thought he had met in my worthip one of the best matches in Spain. He was so overjoyed, that the tear stood in his

eye: he clasped me in his arms at parting, and said, "My son, I am so impatient to see you Gabriela's husband, that you shall be married in eight days at farthest."

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CHAP. II.

Gil Blas, by accident, remembers Don Alphonfo de Leyva, and does him a piece of service, out of vanity.

HE order of my history requires, that I should leave my marriage for a moment, to recount the fervice which I did to Don Alphonfo, my old mafter, whom I had intirely forgotten till now, and I remembered him on this occasion. The government of the city of Valencia became vacant, and when I heard this piece of news, I thought of Don Alphonso de Leyva. I reflected, that this employment would fuit him admirably well; and, not fo much through friendship as oftentation, resolved to ask it for him; representing to myself, that if I should obtain the place, it would do me infinite bonour. Addressing myself therefore to the Duke of Lerma, I told him that I had been steward to Don Crefar de Leyva and his fon; and that having all the reason in the world to love them, I took the liberty to beg the government of Valencia for either the one or the other. The minister answered, "With all my heart, Gil Blas: I love to fee thee grateful and generous. Besides, I esteem the family thou fpeakest of: the Leyvas have been always good fervants

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fervants to the king, and well deserve that place. Thou may'st dispose of it at thy own pleasure: I give it thee for a nuptial present."

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Ravished with my success, I went without loss of time, and desired Calderona to make out letters patent for Don Alphonfo. There I found a great number of people attending in respectful silence, until Rodrigo should give them audience; and preffing through the crowd, I presented myself at the door of his closet, which was immediately opened, and displayed a multitude of knights, commanders, and other people of confequence, whom Calderona heard in their turns. His different behaviour to different people was very remarkable; the received fome with a flight inclination of his head only; others he honoured with a bow, and conducted them to his closet-door. He put (to use the expression) different shades of consideration in the civilities he shewed. On one hand, I perceived some cavaliers, who, shocked at the little regard he paid to them, curfed in their hearts the necessity that compelled them to cringe to fuch a fellow. On the contrary, I observed others, who laughed within themselves at his ridiculous and felf-fufficient deportment. Tho' I made all these fine observations, I was not capable of profiting by them; for I behaved at home just in the same manner, and little minded whether my haughty carriage was blamed or approved, provided it commanded respect.

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Don Rodrigo having, by chance, cast his eyes upon me, halfily quitted a gentleman, to whom he was speaking, and coming up, embraced me with demonstrations of friend. thip, that furprised me not a little. " Ah! my dear colleague, (cried he,) what affair procures me the pleasure of seeing you here? Is there any thing in which I can ferve you?" I told him the cause of my visit: and he affured me, in the most obliging terms, that what I wanted should be done by the fame hour next day. He did not limit his politeness to this, but conducted me as far as the door of the anti-chamber, whither he never used to go, except with grandees, and there embraced me a-new.

What is the meaning of all this civility? (faid I to myfelf, going out,) What can it forebode? Sure Calderona meditates my ruin. Perhaps he is defirous of gaining my friendthip; or, feeling his favour on the decline, cultivates me with a view of engaging my Intercession with our patron in his behalf. I did not know which of those conjectures Ishould adopt. Next day, when I returned, he treated me in the fame manner, loading me with civility and careffes. True, indeed, he bated a great deal of that politeness in his reception of other people who came to speak with him. He was blunt with some, cold with others, and disobliging to every body. But all of them were fufficiently revenged, by an adventure which happened, and which I ought not to pass over in silence. This will be

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an advice to the reader, for those clerks and secretaries who shall read it.

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A man in a very plain dress, and who did not at all appear what he was, approached Calderona, and spoke to him of a certain memorial, which he faid he had prefented to the Duke of Lerma. Don Rodrigo, who did not even look at the cavalier, faid to him, in a furly tone, "What is your name, friend?" " I was called Francillo in my infancy, (replied the cavalier, very coolly,) fince that time, I have had the appellation of Don Francisco de Zuniga *, and, at prefent, my name is the Count de Pedrofo." Calderona, aftonished at these words, and finding that he had to do with a man of the first quality, endeavoured to excuse himself. " Signor, (faid he to the Count,) I beg pardon, if not knowing you"-" I want none of thy excuses, (faid Francillo, with disdain) I despise thy apologies as much as thy incivility. Know, that a minister's secretary ought to receive all forts of people with good manners. Thou mayeft, if thou wilt, be vain enough to look upon thyfelf as thy mafter's deputy; but don't forget that thou art only his valet." down was selby paid.

Though the haughty Don Rodrigo was very much mortified at this incident, he did not become a whit more affable. As for my part, I marked this stroke, and resolved to take care how I behaved to people in giving X 2 audience,

Zuniga, one of the most ancient families of Castile,

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audience, and never to be infolent but with mutes. As Don Alphonso's patent was expedited, I carried it away, and sent it, by an express, to that young nobleman, with a letter from the Duke of Lerma, in which his excellency informed him, that the king had named him to the government of Valencia. I took no notice of the share I had in this nomination; I would not even write; pleasing myself with the hope of telling him by word of mouth, and of surprising him agreeably, when he should come to court, to take the oaths for his employment.

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fort my name Is the Count de Pedrofo.

The preparations for the marriage of Gil Blas, and the great event that rendered them useless.

La I was to marry in eight days. Both Parties prepared for the ceremony: Salero took off rich clothes for the bride; and I hired a chamber maid, a page, and an old squire, for her attendants. All this was ordered by Scipio, who waited even more impatiently than I for the day on which the dowry was to be paid.

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^{*}Valencia, the capital of the kingdom that bears the fame name, is fituated on the banks of the Gudalavira, about half a league from the fea. It is the fee of an archbishop, and feat of an university, a place of great trade; and, on the whole, so agreeable as to have obtained the name of Valencia la hermosa; Valencia the beautiful. This country was formerly in possession of the Moors, from whom the city was taken about the end of the eleventh century, by the famous Ruy Dias, surnamed the Cid.

On the evening preceding the day so much desired, I supped at the house of my father-in-law, with uncles, aunts, male and semale cousins, and played the part of an hypocritical son-in-law to great perfection. I shewed great respect to the goldsmith and his wise, acted the passionate lover to Gabriela, and behaved very courteously to the whole family, to whose slat discourse and cit-like observations I patiently listened. Accordingly, at the price of my patience, I had the good fortune to please all the relations. There was not one among them who did not seem

glad of my alliance.

The repair being ended, the company removed into a great hall, where we were regaled with a concert of vocal and inftrumental music, which was not ill executed. although they had not chosen the best hands of Madrid. Several gay airs, with which our ears were agreeably entertained, put us all in fuch good humour, that we began to form country dances. God knows how we performed, fince I was taken for a difciple of Terpfichore; tho' I had no other principles of that art, than two or three lessons, which I received from a coxcomb of a dancing-mafter, who came to teach the pages, when I lived with the Machioness of Chaves, After we had fufficiently diverted ourselves, it being time for each to think of retiring, I was very prodigal of my hugs and bows. " Adieu, my fon, (faid Salero, embracing me) I will wait on you to-morrow morning,

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with the dowry, in good gold." "My dear father, (I replied) you shall be very welcome." Then wishing the family good night, I got into the coach that waited for me at the gate, and drove homewards.

I was fcarce two hundred paces from Signior Gabriel's house, when fifteen or twenty men, some a-horse back, others a-foot, armed with fwords and carabines, furrounded the coach, and stopped it crying, " In the king's name." They made me come out in a hurry, and threw me into a post chaise, where the chief of these cavaliers mounting along with me, bid the driver proceed for Segovia. I foon gueffed that my fellowtraveller was an honest alguazil, whom I questioned about the cause of my imprisonment. But he answered in the usual tone of those gentlemen, that is, in a brutal manner, that he was not obliged to tell me any. thing of the matter. I observed, that perhaps he might be mistaken in the man. " No, no, (faid he) I know my bufiness better. You are Signior de Santillane; and you I have orders to conduct to the place for which we are bound." Having nothing to reply, I refolved to hold my tongue. We travelled allthe rest of the night, along Mancanarez, in profound filence; changed horses at Colmenar, and arrived in the evening at Segovia*, where I was locked up in the tower.

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^{*} Segovia, a city of New Castile, about twelve leagues from Madrid; famous for its woollen manufacture; the tower that was built by the Moors; the mint, which surpasses all work of the same kind

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The treatment of Gil Blas in the tower of Segovia, and the manner in which he learned the cause of his imprisonment.

HEY began with putting me into a dungeon, where I was left upon thraw, like a malefactor worthy of death. Here I passed the night, not in deploring my condition, for, as yet, I had not perceived the whole of my misfortune, but in talking my remembrance to find out the cause of my imprisonment, I did not doubt that it was the work of Calderona; nevertheless, though I suspected that he had discovered the whole, I could not conceive how he had prevailed upon the duke of Lerma to treat me fo cruelly. Sometimes I imagined that I had been arrested without the knowledge of his excellency; and fometimes I thought that he himself was the cause of my misfortune, for some political reasons that often induce ministers to use their favourites in this manner.

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kind in Europe; and an aqueduct, built by the Empetor Trajan, which remains entire to this day, and is looked upon as one of the finest monuments of antiquity. It extends three thousand paces from one mountain to another; and is supported by one hundred and seventy-seven arches in two tiers, forming as it were a double bridge. This edifice is built of large hewn stones, so artfully joined without mortar or cement, that it remains undamaged to the present age; whereas the little improvements that are occasionally made upon it for the public use, seldom last longer than sisteen or twenty years.

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I was strongly agitated by these different conjectures, when the light of day, pene. trating through a little grate, prefented to my view the horror of the place in which I was. I then grieved without moderation, and my eyes became two fources of tears, which the remembrance of my prosperity rendered inexhaustible. While I abandoned myself to my forrow, a turnkey came into my dungeon, with a loaf and a pitcher of water, for the day's allowance. He looked at me, and observing that my face was bathed in tears, goaler as he was, felt an emotion of pity. "Signior prisoner, (faid he,) don't despair. You must not be so sensible of the viciffitudes of life: you are young, and will fee better days. Mean while, eat the king's allowance with a good grace."

My comforter went out, when he had pronounced these words, to which I made no answer, but by groans and lamentations. I spent the whole day in curling my fate, without thinking of doing honour to my provision, which, to me, in my present situation, seemed not so much a present of the king's bounty, as the effect of his rage; fince it ferved rather to prolong than af-

fuage the pains of the unhappy.

Night, in the mean time, arrived, and immediately a great noise of keys attracted my attention. The door of my dungeon opened, and a moment after, a man entering with a candle in his hand, approached me, faying, Signior Gil Blas, behold one of your old

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friends. I am that Don Andrea de Tordefillas, who lived with you at Grenada, and was gentleman to the archbishop, while you was in favour with that prelate. You defired him, if you remember, to employ his credit in my behalf; and, by his interest, I was named for an employment in Mexico; but, instead of embarking for the Indies, I flopt in the city of Alicant, where I married the daughter of him who commanded the castle, and by a train of adventures, which I shall recount to you by and by, I am now become keeper of the tower of Segovia. I have express orders to keep you from the speech of every living foul, to make you lie upon straw, and live upon bread and water only. But I have too much humanity not to pity your misfortunes: befides, you have done me fervice; and my gratitude prevails over the orders which I have received. Far from being the inftrument of that cruelty which they would exercife upon you, I intend to foften the rigour of your fate. Get up and follow a thoughnd thanks, told him that he reck som

Although Mr Keeper, well deserved my thanks, my understanding was so much dissurbed, that I could not answer one word. I did not fail, however, to follow him thro a court, and up a narrow stair, to a small room, quite a top of the tower. I was not a little surprized when I entered this chamber, to see two lights burning in brazen candlessicks, and two handsome covers on a table.

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"The victuals will be presently brought, (said Tordefillas,) and we will fup here together. I have defined this retreat for your lodging, where you will live much more comfortably than in your dungeon. You will fee, from your window, the flowery banks of the Erema, and the delightful valley which extends from the feet of the mountains that separate the two Castiles, as far as Coca. I know that at first you will not be very fensible of such a fine prospect; but when the violence of your grief shall be mellowed, by time, into a fost melancholy, you will take pleasure in making an excursion with your eyes over fuch agreeable objects. Besides, you may be affured of being well provided in linen, and other necessaries besitting a gentleman of delicacy and tafte. Moreover, you shall have a good bed, comfortable diet, and be furnished with as many books as you choose to read. In a word, you shall be as well treated as a prisoner can be the last to the

Finding myself a little eased by such obliging offers, I took courage, gave my goaler a thousand thanks, told him that he recalled me to life by his generous behaviour, and that I wished I might ever again have an opportunity of shewing my gratitude! And why not have an opportunity? (he replied,) do you think you have lost your liberty for ever? You are mistaken; and I dare affure you, that you will be quit for a few months of imprisonment." "What say you, Signior Don Andrea? (cried I) it seems then you know

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know the cause of my missortune." "I confess (said he) I am not ignorant of the affair. The alguazil, who brought you hither, imparted the secret to me; and I shall now reveal it."

He told me, that the king, being informed of your having, in concert with the count de Lemos, carried the prince of Spain to the house of a suspected lady, had, to punish you both, exiled the count, and sent you to the tower of Segovia, to be treated with all the rigour which you have experienced since your arrival." "And how (said I) did this affair come to the knowledge of the king? it is that circumstance in particular, of which I want to be informed." "And that circumstance (he replied, is what I could not learn from the alguazil,) who, in all likelihood, is himself ignorant of the matter."

Here our conversation was interrupted by the entrance of several valets, who brought up supper. They put upon the table some bread, two cups, two bottles, and three large dishes, in one of which there was a ragout of hare, with plenty of onions, oil and saffron; an olla podrida * in another; and the third contained a turkey-powt on a marmalade of berengena †. When Tordesillas saw that we had every thing we wanted, he sent away his servants, not caring that they should overhear our discourse, and having locked the door.

Olla podrida, a dish composed of all forts of food.

[†] Berengena, a kind of fruit growing like a cucumber, and eaten like French beans with mutton, &c.

door, we fat down at table, opposite to one another. Let us begin (faid he) with what is most needful. You must have a good appetite, after a fast of two days."-So faying, he loaded my plate with victuals, imagining, that he ferved one half flar. ved; and really he had reason to think I would stuff myself with his ragouts. Ne. vertheless, I baulked his expectation; and how much foever my condition required food, I could not swallow a morfel; fo much did I take to heart my prefent fituation. To dispel the cruel images which incessantly afflicted me, my keeper in vain exhorted me to drink, by extolling the excellence of his wine. Had he given me nectar, I should have drank it without pleasure at that time. He perceived my chagrin, and changing his battery, began to recount, in a pleasant manner, the history of his own marriage. But I heard his narration with fuch absence of thought, that, when it was ended, I could not have repeated one word of what he faid. He concluded, that he undertook too much, in attempting to divert my forrow that evening; and when supper was over, got up, faying, " Signior de Santillane, I will leave you to your repose, or rather, to muse at leisure upon your misfortune. But, I repeat it again, it will not be of long duration; the king is naturally good: when his wrath fubfides, and he shall reflect upon the deplorable fituation in which he believes you to be,

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be, he he will think you sufficiently punished." So faying, Mr Keeper went down stairs, and fent up his fervants to uncover the table. They carried off every thing, even to the candles, and I went to bed by the melancholy light of a lamp that was fixed to the wall.

CHAP. V.

His reflections before he went to sleep, and an account of the noise that waked him.

Spent two hours at least in reflecting upon what Tordefillas had told me. I am confined here, then, faid I to myself, for having contributed to the pleasures of the heir apparent. How imprudent was I in doing fervices of that kind to fo young a prince; for his tender years alone make me guilty. Had he been in a more advanced age, the king would, perhaps, have laughed at that which now incenses him so much. But who can have given fuch a piece of information to that monarch, without fearing the refentment of the prince, or that of the duke of Lerma, who will doubtless revenge his nephew the count de Lemos? How then has the king discovered it? that I cannot comprehend.

Hither my doubts always returned. The idea, however, that afflicted me most, that drove me to despair, and from which my mind could not detach itself, was the pillage to which I concluded my effects had

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been abandoned. My strong box! cried I, my dear riches, what is become of you? into whose hands are you fallen? alas! I have loft you, even in less time than that in which you were amassed! I painted to myfelf the disorder that must then reign in my house; and, on that subject made reflections, every one more melancholy than another. The confusion of so many different thoughts threw me into an oppreffion that became favourable; and -fleep, which had avoided me the preceding night, shed his influence over my fenses. To this, the goodness of the bed, the fatigue which I had undergone, as well as the vapours of the victuals and wine, contributed. joyed a profound fleep, and, probably, the day would have furprised me in this condition, had I not been waked, all of a fudden, by a noise pretty extraordinary for a I heard the found of a guitarre, accompanied with a man's voice. I listened with attention, and hearing no more, believed it was a dream: but in a moment my ear was ftruck again with the found of the inftrument, and the same voice, which fung the following verses.

> Parece un soplo ligero; Fero sin dicha un instante Es un siglo te tormento.

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Alas! a year of pleasure passes like a sleeting breeze; but a moment of missortune seems an age of pain.

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My forrow was increased by this couplet, which feemed to have been made on purpose for me. I have but too well experienced the truth of these words, (said 1) methinks the feafon of my prosperity passed away very foon, and that I have been already a whole age in prison. I relapsed into a terrible reverie, and began again to deplore my fate, as if I had taken pleasure in the task. mentations, however, ended with the night; and the first rays of the sun, with which my chamber was enlightened, a little calmed my disquiet. I got up to air my room, by opening the window, and furveyed the country, of which I remembered Mr Keeper had given such a fine description. But I could find nothing to justify what he had faid; the Erema, which I imagined was at least equal to the Tagus, appeared to be no more than a rivulet, its flowery banks were bedecked with the nettle and thiftle only, and the pretended delightful valley presented nothing to my view, but lands for the most part barren and uncultivated. Probably, I was not yet arrived at that fweet melancholy, which made things appear otherwise than I beheld them at that time.

I began to put on my cloaths, and was already half dreffed, when Tordefillas came in, followed by an old-woman fervant who brought shirts and towels for my use. "Signior Gil Blas, (said he) here is linen: don't be frugal of it; for I shall take care to let you have as much as you can use. Well, (added

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he) how did you pass the night? were your forrows suspended for a few moments by sleep?" "I should have slept, perhaps till now (answered I) had I not been awaked by a voice, accompanied by a guitarre." "The cavalier who has disturbed your repose, (said he) is a state prisoner, whose chamber is contiguous to your's. He is a knight of the military order of Calatrava, and has a very amiable character: his name is Don Gaston de Cogollos. You may, if you please, visit and eat with one another. You will find a mutual consolation in each others acquaintance, which will be very agreeable to both."

I affured Don Andrea, that I was extremely fensible of his kindness, in permitting me to unite my grief with that of the cavalier; and as I expressed some impatience to be acquainted with that companion in miffortune, our obliging keeper procured me. the pleasure that very day; and carried me to dinner with Don Gaston, who surprized me with his beauty and fine shape. You may judge what he must be, to make such a strong impression upon eyes accustomed to behold the most shining youth at court. Imagine to yourfelf a man made for love, one of those heroes of romance, who, by shewing themselves only could rob princesses of their rest. Add to this, that nature, which usually deals out her gifts sparingly, had endued Cogollos with a great deal of understanding and valour; so that he was a perfect cavalier.

If I was charmed by this knight, I had alfo the good fortune to be agreeable to him.
He no more fung in the night, for fear of
incommoding me, notwithstanding my entreaties that he would not constrain himself
on my account. An intimacy is foon contracted between two persons oppressed by
misfortune. A tender friendship was the
immediate consequence of our acquaintance,
and became stronger and stronger every day.
The liberty we enjoyed of conversing together when we pleased, was very useful to
us both; since by our discourse we aided
one another, reciprocally, to bear our mis-

fortune with patience.

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One afternoon, entering his room, just as he was going to play on his guitarre, that I might hear him the more conveniently, I fat down on a stool, which was all the feat he had; and he placing himself on his bed's feet, played a very moving air; and fung words to it, which expressed the despair to which the cruelty of a lady reduced her lover. When he had done, I faid to him, with a smile, "Signior Knight, these are words which you was never obliged to employ in your amours: you are too well qualified to find the women cruel." " You have too good an opinion of me, (he replied,) I composed, in my own behalf, the verses which you have heard, to soften a heart which I believe harder than diamond. and move to compassion a lady who treated me with extreme rigour. I must enter-Y 3

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tain you with the story, by which you will also learn the cause of my misfortune."

CHAP. VI.

The history of Don Gaston de Cogollos, and Donna Helena de Galisteo.

TOT much less than four years ago, I fet out from Madrid for Coria, to vifit Donna Eleonora de Laxarilla, my aunt, one of the richest widows in Old Castile. whose heir I am. I was no sooner arrived at her house, than love began to invade my repose. The windows of my apartment faced the lattices of a lady who lived opposite to my aunt's house; and I could easily perceive her, by the affiftance of the width of her grates, and the narrowness of the street. I did not neglect the opportunity; and found my neighbour so handsome, that I was enchanted at once. I expressed my pasfion fo plainly, by my eyes, that the could not be mistaken. She perceived it accordingly; but was not at all disposed to pride herself in her observation, and still less to answer my coquetries.

I made enquiries about this dangerous perfon, who captivated hearts fo suddenly; and learned that her name was Donna Helena, that she was the only daughter of Don George de Galisteo, who possessed a rich manor a few leagues from Coria; that many matches had been in her offer; but her father rejected them all, because he was resolved to give her in

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marriage to his nephew Don Augustine de Olighera, who, in the mean time, had the privilege of feeing and converfing with hiscousin every day. I was not discouraged by this piece of information: on the contrary, it inflamed my passion; and the proud pleasure of supplanting a beloved rival, excited me, perhaps, even more than my love, to purfue my point. I continued then to address Helena with the most passionate looks: I supplicated her maid Felicia in the fame language, in order to implore her affistance. even talked on my fingers. But these gallantries were of no use. I made as little impression on the maid as on her mistres: they feemed equally cruel and inaccessible.

Since they refused to answer the language of my eyes, I had recourse to other interpreters; and fet people to work, to discover what acquaintances Felicia had in town. They got notice, that an old gentlewoman, called Theodora, was her best friend, and that they often visited one another. Overjoyed at this discovery, I went to Theodora in person, and by presents, engaged her in my interests. She espoused my cause, promised to procure for me a private conversation with her friend, at her house, and kept " I am no her promise the very next day. longer unhappy, (faid I to Felicia,) fince my misfortunes have excited your compaffion. How much am I indebted to your friend, for having prevailed upon you to grant me the fatisfaction of an interview!" "Signior,

"Signior, (answered she,) Theodora can do any thing with me: she has engaged me in your behalf; and if it be in my power to make you happy, you shall soon enjoy your wish; but with all my good will, I don't know that I can give you much affiftance: for, not to flatter you, you have never formed a more difficult enterprize. You are in love with a lady who is prepoffessed in favour of another cavalier: and what fort of a lady! one so full of pride and dissimulation, that if, by dint of perseverance and affiduity, you should succeed so far as to cost her some sighs, don't imagine that her pride will give you the pleasure of hearing them." "Ah! my dear Felicia! (cried I, in a transport of grief,) why do you describe the obstacles which I have to furmount! I am affaffinated by your information! deceive me rather than drive me to despair!" So faying, I took one of her hands, and preffing it in mine, put upon are finger a diamond worth three hundred follos, accompanied by fuch moving expressions, as brought the tears into her eyes.

She was too much affected by my discourse, and too well satisfied with my behaviour, to leave me altogether without consolation. She began to smooth the difficulties a little, saying, "Signior, what I have represented ought not to deprive you of hope. Your rival, 'tis true, is not hated; he is at liberty to come and visit his cousin, and talk to her whenever he pleases; and this is a circumstance savour-

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able for you. Their being accustomed to fee one another every day, renders their conversation a little languid: they seem to part without pain, and meet again without pleasure: one would think they are already married. In a word, I don't perceive that my mistress has a violent passion for Don Augustine: besides, as to personal qualifications, there is a difference between you and him, that must turn to your account, in the eyes of fuch a delicate young lady as Donna Helena. Be not discouraged, therefore: continue your gallantry, which I will fecond; and I will not let flip one opportunity of making every thing you do to pleafe her, tend to your advantage with my mistress. In vain shall she attempt to disguise her fentiments. I will foon discover them, in spite of her dissimulation."

After this conversation, Felicia and I parted, very well satisfied with one another. I prepared anew to ogle Don George's daughter, whom I treated with a serenade, in which the verses you have heard were sung by a fine voice, which I had provided for the purpose. After the concert, the maid, in order to sound her mistress, asked how she had been entertained? "The voice (said Donna Helena) gave me pleasure." "And were not the words which were sung very moving?" (replied the maid.) "I paid no attention to them, (said the lady) I listened to the tune only; I took no notice of the verses, neither do I desire to know who gave the serenade."

" If that be the case, (cried the waiting-wo. man) poor Don Gaston de Cogollos is far out in his reckoning, and not very wife in fpend. ing his time in looking at our lattices." " Perhaps it may not be he, (faid the mi. stress, coldly) but some other cavalier, who has declared his passion for me, by this concert." " Pardon me, Madam, (replied Felicia,) it is no other but Don Gaston; by this token, that he accosted me this morning, in the street, and begged me to tell you, that he adores you, in spite of the rigour with which you repay his love; and that, in short, he should think himself the happiest of mankind, if you would allow him to manifest his passion in the usual course of gallantry. This discourse (added she) sufficiently proves that I am not mistaken."

Don George's daughter changed countenance all of a sudden, and darting a severe look at her maid, "You might have dispensed (said she) with repeating that impertinent conversation to me. Let me have no such reports for the suture, if you please: and if that rash youth shall have the presumption to speak to you again, tell him to make his addresses to one who will regard his gallantry more than I do, and to chuse a more honourable passime, than that of being all day long at his windows, to observe what I do in my apartment."

All this was faithfully reported to me, in a fecond interview with Felicia, who pretending that I must not take the words of her mistress in a literal sense, would have persuaded me

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that the affair went on swimmingly. But I, who was ignorant of finesse, and did not believe that the text could be explained in my favour, distrusted the commentary she She laughed at my diffidence, called for paper and ink, and faid, "Signior Knight, write immediately to Donna Helena in the stile of a desponding lover. Paint your sufferings in the most passionate colours, and, in particular, complain of her prohibiting you to appear at your windows. Promise to obey her, but at the same time asfure her, that it will cost you your life. Put this into fuch expressions as you gentlemen are so well skilled in, and leave the rest to I hope the event will do more honour to my penetration than you imagine."

Had I neglected this, I should have been the first lover who did not take the advantage of such an opportunity to write to his mistress. I composed a most pathetic letter, and before I sealed it, shewed it to Felicia, who having read it, said, with a smile, "That if women have the art of captivating the men, these last, in return know very well how to cajole the women." The waiting-maid took my letter, then laying strong injunctions on me to keep my windows shut for a few days, returned to the house of Don George.

"Madam, (said she to Donna Helena, when she went home,) I met Don Gaston, who did not fail to make up to me, and endeavoured to sooth me with flattering expressions. He asked, with a faultering voice, like a cri-

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minal who expects his sentence, if I had delivered his message to you. Then I, faith. ful and ready to execute your orders, cut him short with a vengeance; inveighed a. gainst him, loaded him with reproaches, and left him in the street confounded at my petulance." "I am overjoyed (replied Don. na Helena) that you have rid me of the importunate young fellow; but there was no occasion to speak rudely to him. A young woman ought always to be gentle in her behaviour." " Madam, (said the maid,) a pasfionate lover is not to be banished by words pronounced with a gentle air. Nay, this is feldom accomplished by indignation and rage. Don Gaston, for example, was not repulsed. After having loaded him with reproaches,(as I have faid,) I went to the house of your relation, whither you fent me; and that lady unfortunately detained me too long: I fay too long, because, on my return, I found my man again, whom, I affure you, I did not expect to fee. I was fo much diffurbed at fight of him, that my tongue, which never failed me before, could not furnish me with one fyllable. In the mean time, what does he? he flipt a paper into my hand, which I kept, without knowing what I did, and then disappeared in an instant."

So faying, she pulled my letter out of her bosom, and gave by way of joke to her mistress, who taking it as for diversion, read it over, and then affected reserve. "Truly, Felicia, (said she, with a serious air,) you are a

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fool and a mad creature to receive this billet. What will Don Gafton think of it? and what must I believe? Your conduct gives me cause to diffrust your fidelity, and may make him fuspect that I am pleased with his passion. Alas! perhaps he imagines, at this inftant, that I peruse, with pleasure, the characters which he has wrote. You fee to what shame you have exposed my pride." " O! not at all, Madam, (replied the maid) he can entertain no fuch thoughts; and suppose he did, he shall not preserve them long. I will tell him, when next I fee him, that I have shewn his letter to you; that you looked at it with indifference; and, in fhort, without reading it, tore it with the most mortifying contempt." "You may fafely fwear that I have not read it (faid Donna Helena.) I should be at a lofs, if obliged to repeat two fingle words of it." Don George's daughter was not contented with talking in this manner; she tore my billet, and forbid her woman to talk to me for the future.

As I promifed to play the gallant no more at my windows, fince the fight of me gave offence, I kept them shut several days to render my obedience more affecting; but to supply those looks of which I was abridged, I prepared new serenades for my cruel Helen. One night I repaired under her balcony with musicians, and the guittarres were already struck up, when a cavalier came sword in hand, and disturbed the concert, laying about him at a furious rate among Vol. III.

the performers, who immediately betook The rage which anithemselves to slight. mated that bold intruder, awaked mine: I advanced to punish him, and an obstinate Donna Helena and her at. combat began. tendant hearing the noise of swords, looked thro' the lattice, and feeing two men engaged, waked Don George and his valets with their cries: thefe, as well as feveral people in the neighbourhood, came running to part the combatants, but they arrived too late, and found no body on the field of battle, but a cavalier almost without life, weltering in his own blood; and I was foon known to be that unfortunate person. I was carried to the house of my aunt, whither the most expert furgeons in town were called to my affistance. Every body pitied my fate, and Donna Helena in particular, who then difcovered the bottom of her foul. Her diffimulation gave way to her fentiment, and the was no longer that disdainful creature who piqued herself upon appearing insenfible to my paffion. She was now a tender lover, that abandoned herfelf to forrow without referve. She spent the rest of the night in mourning with her maid, and in curfing her cousin Don Augustine de Olighera, who they concluded must have been the author of their tears; as in effect it was he who had so disagreeably interrupted the ferenade. Being as great a diffembler as his coufin, he had perceived my intentions, without feeming to take any notice of them; and imagining that she favoured

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favoured my flame, had committed this action, to shew that he was not quite so pasfive as the believed him to be. Nevertheless, this melancholy accident was soon forgotten, by reason of the joy that followed it. Tho' I was dangerously wounded, the skill of the furgeons faved my life; but I still kept my chamber, when my aunt Donna Eleonora went to Don George, and demanded his daughter for me in marriage. The father confented to this the more willingly, because he at that time looked upon Don Augustine as a man whom perhaps he should never see again. The good old gentleman was afraid that his daughter would not bestow herself on me without reluctance, because her cousin Olighera had enjoyed the liberty of vifiting her when he would, and of acquiring her affection at leifure; but she feemed fo well disposed to obey her father in this affair, that we may conclude it is an advantage among the ladies, to be a new comer in Spain, as well as elsewhere.

As foon as I could have a private converfation with Felicia, I understood how much afflicted her mistress had been at the bad success of my duel; so that having no longer any reason to doubt that I was the Paris of this Helen, I blessed my wound, since it turned out so propitious to my love, and obtained of Signior Don George the permission of speaking to his daughter in presence of her maid. What a delightful conversa-

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tion this was! I entreated, I pressed the lady in such a manner, to tell me if her father, in yielding her to my tenderness, had done any violence to her inclination, that she owned I was not beholden to her obedience alone. After this charming confession, my whole study was to please her, and contrive entertainments, until the day of our nuptials, which were to be celebrated by a magnificent cavalcade, in which all the nobility of Coria and the neighbourhood, intended to appear

tended to appear.

I gave a grand entertainment to Don George and his daughter, with all their relations and friends, at a superb country-house which my aunt had without the town, on the side of Manroi. Here a concert of vocal and instrumental music was prepared by my order, together with a company of strollers to represent a comedy. In the middle of the feast, one came and whispered to me, that there was a man in the hall who wanted to speak with me. I got up from table to see who it was, and found a stranger, who looked like a valet-de-chambre, and who presented to me a letter, which I opened, and read these words:

"IF you have a regard for your honour, as every knight of your order ought to have, you will not fail to be to-morrow morning in the plain of Manroi, where you will find a cavalier ready to give satisfaction

" for the injury you received from him, and

" to put you, if he can, out of condition to espouse Donna Helena.

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" Don Augustine de Olighera."

If love has great influence over the Spaniards, revenge has still more. I could not read this billet in tranquillity. The very name of Don Augustine kindled a sire in my veins, which had almost made me forget the indispensable duty which I had that day to perform. I was tempted to steal away from the company, and go in fearch of my enemy on the instant. I constrained myself, however, for fear of disturbing the feast, and said to the man who brought the letter, "Friend, tell the cavalier who sent you, that I am too desirous of re-engaging him, to sail of meeting him to-morrow morning before sun-rise, at the appointed place."

Having sent away the messenger with this answer, I rejoined my guests, and resumed my place at table, where I composed my countenance so well, that nobody had the least suspicion of what passed within me. I appeared during the rest of the day, as much entertained as any of them with the pleasures of the feast, which ended about midnight, when the assembly broke up, and every one returned to the town, in the same manner as he had come out. As for my part, I staid in the country house, on pretence of taking the air next morning; but the true reason was, that I might be the sooner at the rendezvous. Instead of going to bed,

Z 3 I waited

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I waited with impatience for day, which, as foon as I perceived, I mounted my best horse, and set out alone, as if I intended to take a ride in the country. I advanced towards Manroi, and discovered in the plain a man on horseback, coming towards me at full speed; upon which I put spurs to my horse, to save him one half of the way. We foon met, and I found it was my rival. "Knight, (faid he, in an infolent tone) it is with regret that I come to blows with you a fecond time; but it is your own fault. After the adventure of the serenade, you ought to have renounced Don George's daughter with a good grace: or at least take it for granted, that you would not be fo eafily quit, if you perfifted in your addresses to her." "You are too proud (answered I) of an advantage which perhaps you owed more to the darkness of the night, than to your fuperior skill. You don't consider that the fuccess of these rencounters depends often on accident." "It is never accidental with me, (faid he, with an arrogant air,) and I will now shew you, that by day as well as night, I know how to punish those audacious knights who interfere with me."

I made no reply to this haughty speech, but alighted instantly. Don Augustine did the same: we tied our horses to a tree, and began to sight with equal vigour. I will frankly own, that I had to do with an enemy who pushed much better than I, altho' I had been two years at school. He was a complete fen-

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cer; I could not possibly have exposed my life to greater danger. Nevertheless, as it often happens that the strongest is vanquished by the weakest, my rival, in spite of all his skill, received a thrust that went thro' his heart, and fell stone dead in an instant.

I returned immediately to the country-house, where I informed a valet de-chambre, whom I could trust, of what had happened, and said to him, "Dear Ramira, before justice can take cognizance of this event, take a good horse, and give my aunt notice of the adventure. Ask of her some money and jewels, and bring them to me at Plazencia, where thou wilt find me in the first inn you come to as you enter the city."

Ramira acquitted himself of his commission with such diligence, that he arrived at Plazencia three hours after me. He told me, that Donna Eleonora was more pleased than afflicted at the news of a duel that revenged the affront which I had received in the first; and that she had sent me all her ready money and jewels, to enable me to travel agreeably in foreign countries, until she

should get the affair accommodated.

To pass over superstuous circumstances, I will only inform you, that I crossed New Castile to the kingdom of Valencia, in order to embark at Denia, from whence I took passage for Italy, where I put myself in a condition to visit different courts, and appear in a suitable character.

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While far from my Helen, I endeavoured as much as in me lay, to beguile my love and forrows; the mourned my absence in fecret at Coria. Instead of approving of the profecution that her family fet on foot a. gainst me, on account of Olighera's death, The wished that all enmity might cease, and my return be haftened by a fpeedy accommodation. Six months had already elapsed fince she had lost me, and I believe her constancy would have still triumphed over time, had the had nothing else but time to combat: but she had still more powerful enemies. Don Blas de Combados, a gentleman from the western side of Galicia, came to Coria, to take possession of a rich estate which had been in vain disputed by his cousin Don Miguel de Caprara; and he fettled in that country, finding it more agreeable than his own. Combados was well made, had an agreeable polite behaviour, and was one of the most infinuating men in the world; fo that he foon became acquainted with all the people of fashion in the town, and was no stranger to their private affairs.

It was not long before he learned that Don George had a daughter, who fed angerous beauty feemed to inflame the men only for their ruin. This piqued his curiofity: he longed to fee fuch a formidable lady: for this purpose, ke sought the friendship of her father, and succeeded so well, that the old man already looked upon him as his fon-in-law; gave him admittance to his house, and the

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liberty of speaking in his presence to Donna Helena. The Galician foon fell in love with That was inevitable. He opened his heart to Don George, who confented to his proposal; he told him, that, resolving not to conftrain his daughter, he left her miftress of her own hand. Upon this, Don Blas, put in practice all the gallantries which he could devise, to please the lady, who seemed infensible to them all, so much was her heart ingroffed by me. Felicia, however, was in the interests of the cavalier, who engaged her by prefents to espouse his cause. therefore employed all her address in behalf of his passion; on the other hand, her father feconded the chamber-maid by his remonstrances; and nevertheless, all their efforts during a whole year, could only torment Donna Helena, without shaking her constancy in the least.

Combados feeing that Don George and Felicia interested themselves for him in vain, proposed an expedient to overcome the obstinacy of a lover so prepossessed as she was. "This (said he) is what I have contrived: we will suppose that a merchant of Coria has received a letter from an Italian sactor, in which, after a detail of things concerning

commerce, are the following words:

^{-&}quot; A Spanish cavalier, whose name is "Don Gaston de Cogollos, has lately arri-

[&]quot; ved at the court of Parma. He calls him-

[&]quot; felf nephew and fole heir of a rich widow " who

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" who lives at Coria, under the name of Donna Eleonora de Laxarilla. He has de-

" manded the daughter of a powerful no-

66 bleman in marriage, but will not fucceed 66 until the truth is known. I am defired

" to apply to you for this purpose: pray let

" me know then, if you are acquainted with

" this Don Gaston, and in what the riches

" of his aunt consist; for your answer will

" decide the marriage. Parma, &c."

The old man looked upon this trick as a piece of wit or ftratagem pardonable in love; and the waiting woman, still less scrupulous than her master, approved of it very much. The invention feemed to them the more ingenious, as they knew Helena to be a proud girl, capable of taking an instantaneous refolution, provided she should have no sufpicion of the cheat. Don George undertook to inform her of my change; and, to make the thing feem more natural, carried along with him the merchant who had received the pretended letter from Parma. The scheme was executed accordingly. The father, in an affected paffion of rage and vexation, faid to Helena, " Daughter, I will no longer obferve to you, that my relations daily request that I will not admit of the murderer of Don Augustine into my family. I have a stronger reason to give you to-day, in order to detach you from Don Gaston. You ought to be ashamed of your fidelity to him. He is a fickle perfidious wretch. Here is a certain

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certain proof of his infidelity. Read this letter, which a merchant of Coria has received from Italy." Helena trembling took the fictitious letter, read it over, considered every expression, and was thunder-struck at the news A fentiment of tenderof my inconstancy. ness made her shed some tears: but soon recalling all her pride, she dried them up, and faid to her father, with a resolute tone, "Signior, you have been witness of my weakness, bear witness also of the victory I gain over myself. 'Tis done. I now despise Don Gafton, and look upon him as the lowest of mankind. But let us talk no more about him. Come, I am ready to follow Don Blas to the altar: let my marriage precede that of the perfidious man who has fo ill repaid my love." Don George, transported with joy at these words, embraced his daughter, applauded her vigorous resolution, and glad of the happy fuccess of his stratagem, made hafte to complete the wishes of my rival.

Donna Helena was thus ravished from me. She yielded herself suddenly to Combados, without listening to love, which at the bottom of her heart spoke in my behalf, or even doubting a moment of a piece of news which might have been suspected in a lover of less credulity. The haughty maid listened to nothing but her pride; and the resentment of the injury which she thought her beauty had received, prevailed over the interest of her tenderness. A few days after

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her marriage, however, she selt some remorfe for having been so precipitate. She reslected that the merchant's letter might have been seigned, and that suspicion gave her some uneasiness; but the amorous Don Blas gave his wife no time to cherish thoughts prejudicial to her repose. His sole study was to amuse her; and in this he succeeded by a continual succession of various pleasures, which he had art enough to invent.

She feemed very well fatisfied with fuch a gallant husband, and they lived together in perfect harmony, when my aunt accommodated my affair with the relations of Don Augustine, and wrote immediately to Italy, to advertise me of her success. Being then at Regio, in the farthermost part of Calabria, I went over into Sicily, from thence to Spain, and at length repaired to Coria on the wings of love. Donna Eleonora, who had not in her letter mentioned the marriage of Don George's daughter, informed me of it on my arrival; and observing that I was afflicted at the news, "You are in the wrong, nephew (faid she) to be fo much grieved at the loss of an unfaithful woman. Take my advice, and banish from your memory a person unworthy of possesfing a place in it."

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As my aunt was ignorant of the deceit which had been practifed on Donna Helena, the was in the right to talk in this manner, and could not have given me a more prudent

dent advice; which therefore I promised to follow, or at least to affect an air of indifference, if I should find myself incapable of vanquishing my passion. I could not, however, refift my curiofity, to know how this marriage had been made; and to be informed of all the particulars, I refolved to apply to Felicia's friend Dame Theodora, whom I have mentioned before. I went to her house, and there by accident found Felicia, who. expecting nothing less than to see me, was confounded, and endeavoured to go away, that she might avoid an explanation which the concluded I would demand. I stopt her, faying, " Why do you fly me? is not the perjured Helena fatisfied with having made a facrifice of my happiness? Has the forbid you to hear my complaints? or do you only want to escape me, that you may make a merit with the ungrateful woman, of having refused me the hearing?"

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"Signior, (answered the waiting-woman) I freely own myself confounded at your presence. I cannot behold you again, without feeling my heart torn with remorse. My mistress has been deceived, and I have been an unfortunate accomplice in seducing her." "O heaven! (cried I) have you the presumption to tell me so? Explain yourself immediately." Then she gave me an account of the stratagem which Combados had practised to rob me of Donna Helen; and perceiving that her detail pierced me to the very soul, Yol. III. A a strove

strove to give me some consolation: she offered me her good offices with her mistress, promised to disabuse her, to paint my despair; in a word, to spare nothing to soften the rigour of my destiny: in sine, she gave me hopes that assuaged my sorrows a little.

I pass over the infinite contradictions she underwent, before she could prevail upon Donna Helena to see me. This, however, she accomplished; and it was concerted between them, that I should be privately admitted into the house of Don Blas, the first time he should go to an estate, where he usually spent a day or two in hunting. This design was soon put in execution: the husband set out for the country; I was informed of the occasion, and one night introdu-

ced into his wife's apartment.

I would have begun the conversation with reproaches; but my mouth was stopt. "It is in vain to recal what is past, (said the lady) the business here is not a fond reconciliation; and you are mistaken if you believe me difposed to flatter your inclination. I declare to you, Don Gaston, that my own motive for giving my confent to this private interview, in consequence of the pressing instances which have been made, is to tell you from my own mouth, that henceforth you must fludy to forget me altogether. Perhaps I might have been better fatisfied with my fate had it been joined to yours; but fince heaven hath ordained it otherwise, I chearfully submit to its decrees."

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" How, Madam! (answered I) is it not enough that I have loft you, and fee the happy Don Blas in quiet possession of the only person I am capable of loving! must I also banish you from my thoughts! You would deprive me of my love, and rob me of the only bleffing that now remains. Ah, cruel woman! do you think it possible for any man whom you have once charmed, to retrive his heart? Know yourself better, and cease exhorting me in vain to chase your idea from my remembrance." "Well then, (the replied with precipitation) do you also cease to hope that I will favour your love with any return. I have but one word to fay: the wife of Don Blas shall never be the lover of Don Gaston. Take your measures accordingly; fly from this place: and let us put a fpeedy end to a conversation with which I upbraid myfelf, in spite of the purity of my intentions; and which I shall think myfelf guilty in prolonging."

At these words, which deprived me of the least glimpse of hope, I sell at her feet, I addressed her in the most pathetic manner; I even employed tears to melt her: but all this served only to excite, perhaps some sentiments of pity, which she was careful of concealing, and which were facrificed to her duty. After having to no purpose exhausted all my moving expressions, by prayers and tears; my tenderness changed of a sudden into rage. I unsheathed my sword, to stab myself before the eyes of the inexorable

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Helena; who no fooner perceived my intention, than she threw herself upon me, to

prevent the confequence.

"Hold, Cogollos, (faid she) is it thus you consult my reputation? In depriving your-felf of life, you are going to load me with dishonour, and make my husband pass for an affassin."

I was so possessed with despair, that, far, from yielding to these words the attention which they deserved, my whole endeavour was to bassle the efforts of the mistress and her maid, to save me from my own fatal design; and, without doubt, I should have succeeded but too soon, if Don Blas, who having been apprised of our interview, instead of going to the country, had concealed himself behind the tapestry, to overhear our conversation, had not come and joined us with all expedition. "Don Gaston (cried he, holding my arms) recal your scattered reason; and do not basely yield to the fury that transports you."

"Is it your business (said I, interrupting Don Blas) to dissuade me from my design? You ought rather, with your own hand, to plunge a poniard in my bosom. You are injured by my passion, unfortunate as it is. Is it not enough that you surprise me at night in your wife's apartment? Is there more required to rouse your revenge! Stab me at once, and rid yourself of a man who connot cease adoring Donna Helena, until he ceases to live." In vain (answered Don Blas)

you endeavour to interest my honour so far as to give you death: you are sufficiently punished by your rashness: and I am so well pleased with the virtuous sentiments of my wife, that I pardon the occasion which she took to shew them. Take my advice, Cogollos, (added he) do not despair like a weak lover, but submit to necessity with courage."

The prudent Galician, by fuch-difcourfe, calmed my rage a little, and waked my virtue. I retired with a defign of removing far from Helena, and the place that she inhabitated; and in two days returned to Madrid, where refolving to employ myfelf wholly in making my fortune, I appeared at court, and there began to make friends; but I was fo unlucky as to attach myfelf in particular to the Marquis of Villareal, a Portugueze nobleman, who, being suspected of a defign to deliver Portugal from the dominion of Spain, was imprisoned in the caftle of Alicant, where he now remains. As the Duke of Lerma knew that an intimacy fubfifted between that nobleman and me. he caused me to be arrested also, and conducted to this place: that minister believes. that I am capable of being an accomplice in fuch a scheme; and he could not have committed a greater outrage upon a noble Ca-

Here Don Gaston lest off speaking; and I, to console him, said, "Signior Cavalier, your honour can receive no stain from this difgrace, which will, doubtless, in the end,

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turn to your advantage. When the Duke of Lerma shall be convinced of your innocence, he will certainly bestow upon you a considerable employment, in order to re-esstablish the reputation of a gentleman unjustly accused of treason."

CHAP. VII.

Scipio finds Gil Blas in the tower of Segovia, and tells him a great deal of news.

UR conversation was interrupted by Tordefillas, who, coming into the chamber, addressed himself to me in these terms: " Signior Gil Blas, I have been speaking to a young man who presented himfelf at the prison gate, and asked if you was not in confinement here. When I refused to fatisfy his curiofity, he feemed very much mortified. " Noble captain, (faid he, with tears in his eyes,) don't reject the humble request I make, to know if Signior de Santillane is in this place. I am his chief domeftic, and you will do a charitable action, in allowing me to fee him. You are looked upon in Segovia as a gentleman of great humanity; and I hope you will not refuse me the favour of conversing a moment with my dear mafter, who is not fo guilty as unfortunate." In short, (continued Don Andrea) the young man expressed such a desire of feeing you, that I have promifed to give him that fatisfaction at night." I affured

I affured Tordefillas, that he could not do me a greater pleasure than to admit a young man, who probably had fomething to communicate, which it imported me very much to know. I waited with impatience for the moment that was to offer my faithful Scipio to my eyes; for I did not doubt that it was he, and I was not mistaken. He was introduced into the tower in the evening; and his joy, which mine alone could equal, broke forth in extraordinary transports when he faw me. For my part, I was so much overjoyed at fight of him, that I held out my arms, and he hugged me in his, without ceremony: the distinction between mafter and fecretary were lost in this embrace; fo glad were they to fee one another.

When we were a little disengaged, I interrogated Scipio about the condition in which he left my house. "You have no house, (he replied,) and to spare you the trouble of asking unnecessary questions, I will tell you, in two words, what paffed at home. Your effects were pillaged, as well by the foldiers as by your own fervants, who, looking upon you as a loft man, paid themselves their own wages with what they could carry off. Luckily for you, I had the address to save from their talons two large bags of double pistoles, which I took out of your strong box, and secured, by putting them into the custody of Salero, who will re-deliver them as foon as you shall be released from this tower, where I believe you

will not be long boarded at his majefty's expence; because you was apprehended without the knowledge of the duke of Lerma."

I asked how he came to know that his ex. cellency had no hand in my misfortune. "O! as for that, (faid he,) I took care to be well informed: a friend of mine, who enjoys the confidence of the Duke d'Uzeda, told me all the particulars of your imprisonment." Calderona (faid he) having discovered, by the officiousness of a valet, that Signiora Sirena, under another name, received the prince of Spain in the night-time; and that this intrigue was conducted by the count de Lemos, with the affistance of Signior de Santillane, refolved to be revenged upon them as well as upon his mistress. With this view, he went privately to the Duke d'Uzeda, and discovered the whole affair. The duke, ravished at having in his hand fuch an opportunity of ruining his enemy, did not fail to use it: he informed the king of what he had heard, and represented to him with great zeal the perils to which the prince had been exposed. This piece of news roused the indignation of his majesty. who immediately ordered Sirena to be shut up in the house of correction, banished the count de Lemos, and condemned Gil Blas to perpetual imprisonment. This (added Scipio) is what my friend told me: by which you fee that your misfortune is the work of the duke d'Uzeda, or rather of Calderona." Lange 19 / Olatil Most Lota Not 11

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From this information, I imagined that my affairs might be retrieved in time; that the duke of Lerma, piqued at his nephew's exile, would exert himself to have that nobleman recalled to court: and I flattered myself that I should not be forgotten by his excellency. What a fine thing hope is! It confoled me all of a fudden for the loss of my effects, which had been stolen; and made me as merry as if I had cause to be so. Far from regarding my prison as an unhappy abode, where I should perhaps end my days, it appeared rather as the means that fortune had used to raise me to some great post: for I reasoned with myself in this manner: the partizans for the prime minister are Don Fernando Borgia, Father Jerome of Florence, and, in particular, Brother Lewis d'Aliaga, who owes to his interest the place he at present possesses at court. With the affistance of these powerful friends, his excellency will demolish all his foes; or perhaps the state will soon alter its appearance: his majesty is very fickly; and as foon as he shall be no more. the prince his fon will begin his reign by recalling the count de Lemos, who will immediately release me from this place, and present me to the new monarch, who will load me with favours. Thus, already elevated with future pleafures, I scarce felt my present misfortune: but I believe the two bags of doubloons, which my fecretary told me he had deposited with the goldsmith,

contributed, as much as this hope, to the

fudden change of my disposition.

I was too well fatisfied with the zeal and integrity of Scipio, to be filent on that fub. ject: I offered him the half of the money which he had preserved from the pillage; but this he refused: " I expect (faid he) another mark of acknowledgment." As much furprised at his discourse as at his refusal, I asked what I could do for him. "Don't let us part, (answered he) allow me to attach my fortune to yours: I have a friendship for you which I never felt for any other mafter." " And I can affure thee, child, (faid I) there is no love lost; the very first moment thou camest to offer thy service, I was pleased with thy appearance: we must have been born under the Ballance, or Gemini, which are faid to be the two constellations that unite the friendship of men. I willingly accept the fociety thou hast proposed; and will begin it by intreating the keeper to shut thee up with me in this tower." " Nothing can give me more pleasure, (cried he) you anticipate my defire. I was just going to conjure you to ask that favour of him: your company is dearer to me than liberty itself: I will only fometimes go to Madrid on the fcout, and fee if some change may not have happened at court which can be favourable to you: fo that in me you will enjoy at once a confident, courier, and fpy."

These advantages were too considerable to be rejected: I therefore kept along with me a

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person so useful, with the permission of the obliging keeper, who could not refuse me such an agreeable consolation.

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CHAP. VIII.

The motives and success of Scipio's first journey to Madrid. Gil Blas falls sick: the consequence of his distemper.

F it be usually observed, that we have no greater enemies than our domestics; it must likewise be owned, that when they happen to be faithful and affectionate, they are our best friends. After the zeal that Scipio had manifested, I could not look upon him but as another self. There was, therefore, no more subordination between Gil Blas and his secretary; no more ceremony: they lodged together in the same room, using the same table and bed.

There was a great deal of gaiety in Scipio's conversation; he might have been justly surnamed the good-humoured lad: besides, he had a good head, and I profited by his advice. "Friend, (said I to him one day,) methinks it would be no bad scheme for me to write to the duke of Lerma: this could produce no bad effect: What is thy opinion of the matter?" "Yes; but (answered he) the great are so different from themselves, at different times, that I don't know how your letter will be received: nevertheless, I am of opinion, that you should write in the mean time. Altho' the

the minister loves you, you must not trust to his friendship, for being remembered by him: these kind of patrons easily forget those who are out of sight or hearing."

"Although this was but too true, I replied, I judge more favourably of my patron, to whose kindness for me I am no stranger: I am persuaded that he pities my affliction, which incessantly presents itself to his mind: he, probably, waits until the king's wrath shall subside, before he takes me out of prison." "In good time, (he resumed,) I wish your opinion of his excellency may be right: implore his affishance then by a very moving letter, which I will carry to him; and I promise to deliver it into his own hand."

I immediately called for paper and ink, and composed a morsel of eloquence, which Scipio thought very pathetic, and Tordefillas preferred even to the homilies of the

archbishop of Grenada.

I flattered myself, that the duke of Lerma would be moved with compassion, in reading the melancholy account which I gave him, of the miserable condition in which I was; and in that considence dispatched my courier, who no sooner arrived at Madrid, than he went to the minister's house, and met a valet-de-chambre of my acquaintance, who procured for him an opportunity of speaking to the duke.—
"My lord, (said Scipio, presenting to his excellency the pacquet with which he was

intrusted) one of your most faithful servants stretched upon straw, in a dismal dungeon of the tower of Segovia, most humbly intreats your grace to read this letter, which a turnkey, out of pity, gave him liberty and means to write." The minister opened, and perused the letter: but although he beheld in it a picture capable of melting the most obdurate foul; far from feeming affected at my distress, he raised his voice, and, in the hearing of feveral persons present, said to the courier, with a furious air, " Friend, tell Santillane, that he has a great deal of affurance to address himself to me, after the unworthy action he has committed, and for which he is so justly chastised. He is a wretch who must not depend upon my protection; for I abandon him to the refentment of the king."

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Scipio, in spite of all his effrontery, was disconcerted at this discourse; but, notwithstanding his consustion, endeavoured to intercede for me. "My lord, (he resumed,) the poor prisoner will die of grief, when he hears the answer of your excellency." The duke made no reply to my mediator, but by a stern look, and turned his back upon him. It was thus the minister treated me, the better to conceal the part he had in the amorous intrigue of the Prince of Spain: and this ought to be a warning to all little agents, whom noblemen use in their secret

and dangerous negociations.

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When my fecretary returned to Segovia, and made me acquainted with the fuccess of his commission, I was replunged into the dire abyss of despondency in which I found myfelf the first day of my imprisonment. thought myself even still more unhappy, since I had now no reason to expect the protection of the Duke of Lerma. My courage funk apace, and, notwithstanding all that they could fay to raise it again, I became a prey to the most keen forrow, which threw me,

by degrees, into a most violent fever.

Mr Keeper, who interested himself in my prefervation, imagining that he could not do better than call physicians to my assistance, brought two to visit me, who, by their appearance, feemed zealous ministers of the goddes Libitina *. " Signior Gil Blas, (faid he, prefenting them to me,) here are two Hippocrates's come to fee you, they will fet you a-foot again in a little time." I was fo much prejudiced against all manner of physicians, that I should have certainly given them a very bad reception, had I been in the least desirous of living; but at that time I felt myself so much tired of life, that I was glad Tordefillas had put me into their hands.

" Signior Cavalier, (faid one of these doctors to me) in the first place, you must repose an intire confidence in our skill." " I have a most perfect dependence on it, (answered I:) with your affiftance, I am very fure that in a

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The goddess who presides over funerals.

few days, I shall be cured of all my distempers." "Yes, (he replied,) with God's help you shall. At least, we will do our endeavour for that purpose." These gentlemen actually behaved to a miracle, and put me into fuch a good way that I was visibly posting to the other world. Den Andrea despairing of my recovery, had already sent for a Franciscan friar, to prepare me for my end. The good father having done his duty, had already retired; and I myself believing that my last hour approached, beckoned Scipio to the bed-fide. " My dear friend, (faid I to him, with a faint voice, fo much was I enfeebled by the medicines I had taken, and the bleedings I had undergone,) I leave to thee one of the bags which are at Gabriel's house, and conjure thee to carry the other into the Asturias, to my father and mother, who must have great occasion for it, if they be still alive. But alas! I fear they could not bear up against my ingratitude: the report which, doubtless, Muscada made to them of my hard-heartedness, has, perhaps, occasioned their death. If heaven hath preserved them, in spite of the indifference with which I required their affection, give them the bag of doubloons, and beg them, from me, to pardon my unnatural behaviour. If they are no more, I charge thee to employ the money, in causing prayers to be put up for the repose of their fouls and mine." So faying, I stretched out my hand, which he bathed with his tears, without being B b 2

able to answer one word; so much was the poor young man afflicted at the prospect of losing me. This proves that the tears of an heir are not always the tears of joy disguised.

Llay thus, in expectation of my exit: but I was baulked. My doctors having abandoned me, left the field to free nature. was faved by their defertion. The fever, which, according to their prognostic, was to carry me off, quitted me immediately, as if it intended to give them the lie. I recovered gradually, and by the greatest good luck in the world, a perfect tranquillity of mind was the fruit of my disease. I then had no need of consolation: I entertained for riches and honour all the contempt which the opinion of approaching death had made me conceive; and now restored, as it were, to myfelf, bleffed my misfortune. I thanked heaven for it, as for a particular favour, and firmly resolved never to return to court, even if the duke of Lerma should recal me. I proposed rather, if ever I should be released, to purchase a cottage, and live in it like a philosopher.

My confident approved of my design, and told me, that in order to hasten the execution of it, he intended to go and solicit my enlargement at Madrid. "There is a thing come into my head, (added he,) I know a person who can serve you. She is the favourite waiting woman of the prince's nurse, and a girl of understanding. I will make her apply to her mistress in your behalf; and will at-

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tempt every thing to get you out of this tower, which is still a prison, notwithstanding the good treatment you receive in it." "Thou art in the right, (answered I;) go, my friend, and begin this negociation, without loss of time. Would to heaven we were already in our retreat!"

CHAP IX.

Scipio returns to Madrid, and procures the enlargement of Gil Blas, on certain conditions. What course they steer together when they leave the tower of Segovia, and the conversation that passes between them.

Scipio fet out once more for Madrid; and I, in expectation of his return, applied myfelf to reading, being furnished with more books than I wanted by Tordesillas, who borrowed them from an old commander that could not read, though he had a fine library, to maintain the appearance of a literation I loved, in particular, good works of morality, because I found in them, every moment, passages that slattered my aversion for the court, and my inclination for solitude.

I spent three weeks, without hearing a syllable of my agent, who at length returned, and said to me with a gay air, "This time, Signior de Santillane, I bring good news; Madam the nurse interests herself in your behalf. Her maid, at my intreaty, in consideration of an hundred pistoles that I have consigned to her, has been so generous

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as to engage her to beg your release of the Prince of Spain; and that Prince, who, as I have already observed, can refuse her nothing, has promised to ask it of the king his father. I am come hither in a hurry, to apprize you of it, and shall return immediately, to put the finishing stroke to the work." So saying, he left me, and went back to court.

His third trip was not of long duration. In eight days my man returned, and told me, that the Prince had, not without difficulty, obtained my release. This piece of information was confirmed the same day by Mr Keeper, who embraced me, faying, " My dear Gil Blas, thank heaven! you are free! the gates of this prison are open to you; but upon two conditions, which, perhaps, will give you a great deal of pain, and which I am obliged to inform you of, though not without regret. His majesty forbids you to appear at court, and orders you to quit the kingdom of Castile in a month. I am very much mortified that you are prohibited from going to court." " And I am overjoyed at it, (I replied:) God knows what my opinion of it is. I expected but one favour from the king, and I have received two."

Being affured that I was no longer prisoner, I hired two mules, which my confident and I mounted next day, after having bid adieu to Cogollos, and returned a thousand thanks to Tordesillas, for all the marks of friendship I

had

had received at his hands. We set out merrily for Madrid, to retrieve, from the hands of Signior Gabriel, our two bags, in each of which were five hundred doubloons. My affociate faid to me by the way, " If we are not rich enough to buy a magnificent estate, we can, at least, purchase a commodious one." " So we had a little hut, (answered I,) I should be satisfied with my condition: for, though I am scarce in the middle of my carreer, I feel myself quite detached from the world, and intend, for the future, to live for myself only. Besides, I must tell thee, I have formed an enchanting idea of a country life, the pleasures of which I enjoy by anticipation. Methinks I already behold the enamelled meads, hear the nightingales fing, and the brooks murmur. Sometimes I divert myself in hunting, and sometimes in fishing. Imagine to thyself, my friend, all the different pleasures that await us in solitude, and thou wilt be as much charmed with it as I am. With regard to eating, the most simple nourishment is the best. A morfel of bread may fatisfy us when we are hungry, and the appetite with which we eat it will make us think it excellent food. The pleasure does not consist in the quality of exquisite dishes, but centers wholly in ourfelves; and this is fo true, that the most delicious of my meals are not those in which the greatest delicacy and abundance reign. Frugality is a fource of delights, and wonderfully conducive to health." " By

" By your leave, Signior Gil Blas, (faid my fecretary, interrupting me,) I am not altogether of your opinion, with regard to the pretended frugality you praise so much. Why should we live like Diogenes? If we indulge our appetites a little, we shall not find ourselves a bit the worse for it. Take my advice, and fince we have, thank God. wherewithal to render our retreat agreeable, let us not make it the habitation of hunger and poverty. As foon as we shall have got possession of our land, we must fortify our house with good wines, and all other provifions fuitable to people of tafte, who did not quit the commerce of mankind, with a view of renouncing the conveniencies of life; but rather to enjoy them with more tranquilli-" That which a man has in his house tv. " (fays Hefiod) never hurts him: whereas " that which he has not may. It is better " (adds the fame author) for a man to have " all things necessary in his possession, than

"How the devil! Mr Scipio, (cried I,) come you to know the Greek poets? Ha! where did you pick up acquaintance with Hefiod?" "In the house of a learned man, (he replied) I served a pedant of Salamanca some time. He was a great commentator, and would tos you up a large volume in a twinkling, composed of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin quotations, taken from books in his library, and translated into the Castilian tongue. As I was

" in his wish only."

his amanuensis, I retained in my memory a great number of sentences, as remarkable as that which I repeated." "If that be the case, (said I,) your memory is well garnished. But, to return to your scheme, in what kingdom of Spain do you think we shall establish our philosophical residence?" "I vote for Arragon, (replied my consident;) we will there sind charming spots, where we may lead a delicious life." "Well, (said I,) be it so. Let us fix in Arragon. I consent to the proposal; and I wish we may there find a place of abode, that will afford all those pleafures with which I feast my imagination."

CHAP. X.

Their behaviour at Madrid. Gil Blas meets a certain person in the street. The consequence of that meeting.

HEN we arrived at Madrid, we alighted at a small house, where Scipio had lodged in his expeditions; and the first thing we did, was to repair to Salero, in order to retrieve our doubloons. He gave us a very civil reception, and expressed a good deal of joy in seeing me at liberty. "I protest to you, (said he,) I was so much affected with your missortune, that I conceived a disgust at all alliances with courtiers, their fortunes are so uncertain; and therefore, gave my daughter Gabriela in marriage to a wealthy merchant." "You were in the right, (answered I:) for besides

besides that this match is more solid, a citizen who marries his daughter to a man of quality, has not always reason to be satis-

fied with monfieur his fon-in-law."

Then shifting the subject, and coming to the purpose, "Signior Gabriel, (added I,) be so good, if you please, as to deliver the two thousand pistoles, which"—"Your money is ready for you," (said the goldsmith, interrupting me,) and conducting us into his closet, shewed us the two bags, with notes upon them, containing these words, "These bags of doubloons belong to Signior Gil Blas de Santillane." "There they are, (said he,) just as they were committed to my care."

I thanked Salero for the service he had done me: and, very well confoled for the loss of his daughter, carried the bags home, where we began to examine our double pistoles. The tale was just, after having deducted about fifty which had been employed to procure my enlargement. Our fole study now was to put ourselves in a condition to depart for Arragon. My fecretary undertook to buy a chaife and two mules, and I provided ourselves with clothes and linen .-While I was going from one place to another in the streets, bargaining for what I wanted, I met Baron Steinbach, that officer of the German guards, in whose house Don Alphonso had been brought up.

I faluted that cavalier, who knowing me also, came and embraced me with great affection. "I am extremely glad (said I to

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him) to fee your lordship in such good health, and to find at the fame time an opportunity of hearing of Don Cæsar and Don Alphonso de Leyva." " I can give you a certain account of them both, (answered he,) for they are now actually at Madrid, and lodge in my house. About three months ago they came to town to thank his Majefty for a post which Don Alphonso has received, in confideration of the fervices which his ancestors had done the state. He is made governor of the city of Valencia, without having asked the place, or even defired any body to folicit for him. Nothing can be more generous: and this shews that our monarch delights in recompensing valour."

Though I knew much better than the Baron de Steinbach what the true motive was, I did not feem to know any thing of the matter; but expressed such a vehement defire to falute my old mafters, that, in order to fatisfy me, he carried me home with him immediately. I was curious to try Don Alphonfo, and judge, by the reception I should meet with from him, whether or no he had any remains of affection for me. I found him in a hall, playing at chess with the baroness; and as foon as he perceived me, he quitted the game, got up, and advancing towards me with transport, pressed my head within his arms, faying, with marks of real joy, "Santillane, have I found you again! I am overjoyed at meeting with you! It was not my fault that ever we parted: for I defired you, if you remember, not to leave the castle of Leyva. You had no regard to my request; but I am far from being angry with you on that account. I am even beholden to you for the motive of your retreat. But, since that time, you ought to have let me heard from you, and spared me the trouble of sending in vain to find you at Grenada, where Don Fernando, my brother-in-law, wrote me

you was."

After this gentle reproach, he continued, "Tell me what your business is at Madrid. You have, I suppose, some employment here. Be affured, that I share as much as ever in what concerns you."-" Signior, (answered I,) fomething less than four months ago, I filled a pretty confiderable post at court; having had the honour to be fecretary and confident to the duke of Lerma."-" Is it possible! (cried Don Alphonso, with extreme aftonishment,) what! was you in the confidence of the prime minister?"-" I gained his favour, (faid 1,) and loft it in the manner you shall hear." I then recounted the whole story, and ended my narration with the resolution I had taken to buy, with the flender remains of my past profperity, a cottage, in which I proposed to lead a retired life. The fon of Don Cæfar having listened very attentively, replied, « My

My dear Gil Blas, you know I always loved you. You shall be the sport of Fortune no more. I will deliver you from her power, by making you master of an estate, which she cannot deprive you of. Since you design to live in the country, I bestow upon you a small farm, which we have hard by Lirias, about four leagues from Valencia. You know the place, and it is a present which we are in a condition of making, without incommoding ourselves in the least. I dare answer for my father's confent, and know that it will give great plea-

fure to Seraphina."

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I threw myself at the feet of Don Alphonfo, who immediately raised me up. I kissed his hand, and more charmed with the goodness of his heart, than with the value of his favour, "Signior, (faid I) your behaviour enchants me. The present which you make is the more agreeable, as it precedes the knowledge of a piece of service which I did you: and I would rather owe it to your generofity than to your acknowledgment." My governor was a little surprized at my discourse. and did not fail to ask what this pretended fervice was. I told him; and the information redoubled his furprize. He, as well as the Baron de Steinbach, was far from thinking that the government of the city of Valencia had been bestowed upon him by my interest. Nevertheless, as he could not doubt my veracity, "Gil Blas, (faid he) fince I owe my post VOL. III. to

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to you, I don't intend to confine my gratuity to the little farm of Lirias, I will give you along with it two thousand ducats yearly."

"Halt there, Signior Alphonso, (said I, interrupting him) don't awake my avarice. I have too well experienced, that riches serve only to corrupt my morals. I accept, with all my heart, your farm of Lirias, where I will live comfortably, with the money which I have already in my possession. But that is sufficient; and far from desiring more, I would rather consent to lose the superstuity of what I possess. Riches are a burden to one in retirement, who seeks

only to enjoy quiet."

While we conversed in this manner, Don-Cæsar coming in, expressed as much joy at feeing me, as his fon had done before; and when he understood the obligation which his family lay under to me, he pressed me to accept the annuity, which I again refused. In fhort, the father and fon carried me instantly to a notary's house, where they caused a deed of gift to be made out, and figned it with more pleasure than they would have felt in figning a deed to their own advantage. When it was executed, they put it into my hand, faying, the farm of Lirias was no longer theirs, and that I might go and take possession of it when I would. They then went back to the house of Baron de Steinbach; and I flew to our lodgings, where my fecretary was tavished with admiration, when I informed him

him that we had an estate in the kingdom of Valencia, and recounted in what manner I had made this acquisition. "How much (said he) may this small dominion be worth?" "Five hundred ducats per annum, (I replied;) and I can assure thee, it is a lovely solitude, which I know perfectly well, having been there several times, in quality of steward to the Lords of Leyva. It is a small house on the borders of the Guadalaviar, in a hamlet of sive or six houses, and in

the midst of a charming country."

"What pleases me still more in it, (cried Scipio,) is, that we shall have fine venison, with wines of Benicarlo, and excellent muscadine. Come, Master, let us make haste to quit the world, and gain our hermitage." "Ilong as much as thou doeft to be there, (I replied;) but I must first make a tour to the Afturias. My parents are there in no very agreeable fituation; and I intend to conduct them to Lirias, where they will pass the remainder of their days in quiet.-Heaven, perhaps, has granted me this afylum, on purpose to receive them, and would punish me, if I failed in my duty." Scipio approved very much of my defign, and even excited me to put it in execution. "Let us lose no time, (faid he,) I have already secured a chaise, let us buy mules immediately, and fet out for Oviedo." "Yes, my friend, (1 replied,) let us depart as foon as we can. I think it my indispensible duty,

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to share the sweets of my retirement with the authors of my being. Our journey will not be long. We shall soon see ourselves settled in our hamlet, where, when I arrive, I will write over the door of my house, these two Latin verses, in letters of gold:

Inveni portum. Spes & fortuna valete. Sat me lusistis, ludite nunc alios.



THE END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.